AN

EXTRACT

FROM

The Rev. Mr. LAW's

Later WORKS.

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AN

EXTRACT

FROM THE

CASE

OF

REASON,

OR

NATURAL RELIGION,

Fairly and fully ſtated.

In ANSWER to a BOOK, intitled

Chriſtianity as Old as the Creation.

THE

INTRODUCTION,

Shewing the

STATE of the Controverſy.

THE infidelity which is now openly declared for, pretends to ſupport itſelf upon the *ſufficiency*, *excellency*, and *abſolute perfection* of Reaſon, or Natural Religion.

The author with whom I am engaged, makes no attempt to invalidate the *hiſtorical evidence* on which Chriſtianity is founded; but by arguments drawn from the nature of God, and natural Religion, pretends to prove, that no Religion can come from God, which teaches any thing more than that, which is fully manifeſt to all mankind by the *mere light* of nature.

His chief principles may be reduced to theſe following propoſitions.

1. That human reaſon, or natural light, is the *only means* of knowing all that God requires of us.

2. That reaſon, or natural light, is ſo full, ſufficient, plain, and certain a rule in all religious duties, that no external divine revelation can add any thing to it, or require us to believe or practiſe any thing, that was not as fully known before. A revelation, if ever made, can only declare thoſe very *ſame* things *externally*, which were before equally declared by the *internal* light of nature.

3. That this muſt be the caſe of natural and revealed religion, unleſs God be an arbitrary Being. For if God be not an arbitrary Being, but acts according to the reaſon and nature of things; then he can require nothing of us by revelation, but what is already required by the nature and reaſon of things. And therefore, as he expreſſes it, *reaſon and revelation muſt exactly anſwer one another like two tallies* *.

4. That whatever is at any time admitted as matter of religion, that is not manifeſt from the reaſon of the thing, and plainly required by the light of nature, is groſs ſuperſtition.

5. That it is inconſiſtent with the divine perfections, to ſuppoſe, that God can by an external revelation give any religious knowledge, at *any time*, to *any people*, which was not equally given at *all* times, and to *all* people.

This is the ſtate of the controverſy. As to the railing accuſations, which this author pours out, at all adventures, upon the Clergy, I ſhall wholly paſs them over; my intention being only to appeal to the reaſon of the reader, and to add nothing to it, but the ſafe, unerring light of divine revelation.

CHAP.

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CHAP. I.

Enquiring, whether there be any thing in the nature *and* condition *of man, to* oblige *him to think, that he is not to admit of any doctrines or inſtitutions, as revealed from God, but ſuch as his own reaſon can prove to be neceſſary from the nature of things.*

I BEGIN with enquiring what there is to *oblige* a man to hold this opinion, becauſe if there is not ſome ſtrong and plain proof ariſing from the *nature* and *condition* of man, to *oblige* him thus to abide by the ſole light of his own reaſon; it may be ſo far from being a duty, which he owes to God, that it may be reckoned amongſt his moſt criminal preſumptions. And the pleading for this authority of his own reaſon; may have the guilt of pleading for his greateſt vanity. And if, as this Writer obſerves, *ſpiritual pride be the worſt ſort of pride*, * a confident reliance upon our own Reaſon, as having a right to determine all matters between God and man, if it ſhould prove to be a *groundleſs pretenſion*, bids fair to be reckoned the higheſt inſtance of the *worſt* kind of the worſt of ſins.

Every other inſtance of vanity, every degree of perſonal pride, and ſelf-eſteem, may be a pardonable weakneſs in compariſon of this. For how ſmall is that pride which only makes us prefer our own perſonal beauty or merit to that of our fellow creatures, when compared with a ſelf-confiding reaſon, which is too haughty to adore any thing in the divine counſels, which it cannot fully comprehend; or to ſubmit

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mit to any directions from God, but ſuch as its own wiſdom could preſcribe? Thus much is certain, that there can be no *medium* in this matter. The claiming this authority to our own reaſon, muſt either be a very great duty, or among the greateſt of ſins.

If it be a *ſin* to admit of any *ſecrets* in divine providence, if it be a *crime* to aſcribe wiſdom and goodneſs to God in things we cannot comprehend: If it be a *baſeneſs* and *meanneſs* of ſpirit to believe that God can teach us *better* or *more* than we can teach ourſelves: If it be a *ſhameful apoſtaſy* from the dignity of our nature, to ſubmit to any *myſterious providence* over us, to comply with any other methods of *homage* and *adoration*, than ſuch as we could of ourſelves contrive and juſtify; then it is certainly a great duty to aſſert and maintain this authority of our own reaſon.

On the other hand; If the profoundeſt humility towards *God*, be the higheſt inſtance of piety: If every thing within us and without us, if every thing we know of God, every thing we know of ourſelves preaches up humility to us, as the foundation of every virtue, as the life and ſoul of all holineſs: If *ſin* had its beginning from *pride*, and *hell* be the effect of it, if *devils* are what they are through ſpiritual pride and ſelf-conceit, then we have great reaſon to believe, that the claiming this authority to our reaſon, in oppoſition to the revealed wiſdom of God, is not a frailty of *fleſh* and *blood*, but that ſame ſpiritual pride which turned *angels* into *apoſtate* ſpirits.

Since therefore this appealing to our own reaſon, as the abſolutely *perfect rule* of all that ought to paſs between God and man, has an *appearance* of a pride of the *worſt* kind, and ſuch as unites us both in temper and conduct with the fallen ſpirits of darkneſs, it highly concerns every pleader on that ſide, to conſider what grounds he proceeds upon, and to aſk himſelf, what there is in the *ſtate* and *condition* of human nature, to oblige him to think, that nothing can be *divine* or *holy*, or *neceſſary*, in religion, but what *human* reaſon dictates?

I hope

I hope the reader will think this a fair ſtate of the caſe, and that all the light we can have in this matter, muſt ariſe from a thorough conſideration of the *ſtate* and *condition* of man in this world. If without revelation he is free from myſteries as a *moral* and *religious* agent, then he has ſome plea from his *ſtate* and *condition* to reject *revealed* myſteries.

But if in a ſtate of natural religion, he can't acknowledge a divine providence, or worſhip God, without *as much* implicit faith, and ſubmiſſion of his reaſon, as any revealed myſteries require; then his *ſtate* and *condition* in the world, condemns his refuſal of any revelation ſufficiently atteſted to come from God. This enquiry therefore into the ſtate and condition of man, being ſo plainly the true point of the controverſy, I hope to obtain the reader's impartial attention to it.

Had mankind continued in a ſtate of *perfect innocence*, without ever failing in their duty either to God or man, yet even in ſuch a ſtate, they could never have known what God would or would not reveal to them, but by ſome expreſs revelation from him. And as God might intend to raiſe them to ſome higher, and unknown ſtate of perfection; ſo he might raiſe them to it by the revelation of ſuch things as their own reaſon, though uncorrupt, yet could not have diſcovered.

But if man, in a ſtate of *innocence*, could have no pretence to ſet himſelf againſt divine revelation, and make his own reaſon the *final judge* of what God could, or could not reveal to him; much leſs has he any pretence for ſo doing in his preſent ſtate of *ſin*, *ignorance*, and *miſery*. His *nature* and *condition* is ſo far from furniſhing him with reaſons againſt revelation, againſt any *ſupernatural* help from God; that it ſeems to be inconſolable without it; and every circumſtance of his life prepares him to hope for terms of *mercy* and deliverance from his preſent guilt and miſery, not according to *ſchemes* of his *own* contrivance, not from his *own knowledge* of the *nature*, and *reaſon*, and *fitneſs* of things, but from ſome *incomprehenſible depth* of divine goodneſs.

For

For if ſin, and miſery, and ignorance, cannot convince us of our own weakneſs, cannot prepare us to accept of any *methods* of *atoning* for our guilt, but ſuch as our own diſordered reaſon can ſuggeſt, we are not far from the hardened ſtate of thoſe miſerable ſpirits that make war againſt God.

For to inſiſt upon the *prerogative* of our own nature, as qualifying us to make our own peace with God, and to reject the *atonement* which he has provided for us, becauſe we eſteem it more fit and reaſonable, that our *own repentance* ſhould be ſufficient without it, is the ſame height of *pride* and *impiety*, as to affirm, that we have no need of any repentance at all.

For as mankind, if they had continued in a ſtate of *Innocence*, could not have known how their innocence was to be rewarded, or what changes of ſtate God intended them for, but as revelation had diſcovered theſe things unto them: So after they were *fallen* into a ſtate of guilt and ſin, they could never know what *miſery* it would expoſe them to; or *when*, or *how*, or whether they were ever to be delivered from it, and made as happy as if they had *never* ſinned; theſe are things that nothing but a revelation from God could teach them.

So that for a ſinner to pretend to appoint the *atonement* for his own ſins, or to think himſelf able to tell what it *ought* to be, is as fooliſh and vain a preſumption, as if man in *innocence* ſhould have pretended to appoint his own method of being changed into a *Cherub*.

The writers againſt Revelation appeal to the *Reaſon* and *Nature* of things, as *infallibly* diſcovering every thing that a Revelation from God can teach us.

Thus our Author; *If the relations between things, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, be not the ſole Rule of God's actions, muſt not God be an arbitrary Being? But if God only commands what the nature of things ſhew to be fit, it is ſcarce poſſible that men ſhould miſtake their duty; ſince a mind*

mind that is attentive can as eaſily diſtinguiſh fit from unfit, as the eye can beauty from deformity *.

It is granted, that there is a fitneſs and unfitneſs of actions founded in the nature of things, and reſulting from the relations that perſons and things bear to one another. It is alſo granted, that the reaſonableneſs of moſt of the duties of children to their parents, of parents to their children, and of men to men, is very apparent, from the relations they bear to one another; and that ſeveral of the duties which we owe to God, plainly appear to us, as ſoon as we acknowledge the relation that is between God and us.

But then, this *whole argument* proves directly the contrary to that which this author intended to prove by it.

I here therefore join with this author; I readily grant, that the nature, reaſon and relations of things and perſons, and the fitneſs of actions reſulting from thence, is the *ſole rule* of God's actions. And I appeal to this one common principle, as a ſufficient proof that a man cannot thus abide by the *ſole light* of his own reaſon, without contradicting the nature and reaſon of things, and denying this to be the *ſole Rule* of God's actions.

For if the *fitneſs* of actions is founded in the *nature* of things and perſons, and this fitneſs be the *ſole Rule* of God's actions, it is certain that the rule by which he acts, muſt in many inſtances be *entirely* inconceiveable by us, ſo as not to be known *at all*, and in no inſtances *fully* known, or *perfectly* comprehended.

For if God is to act according to a *fitneſs founded* in the *nature* of things, and nothing can be fit for him to do, but what has its fitneſs founded in his own *incomprehenſible* nature, muſt he not neceſſarily act by a rule *above* all human comprehenſion? If he muſt govern his actions by his own nature, he muſt act by a *Rule* that is juſt as *incomprehenſible* to us as his own nature.

And

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And we can be no farther *competent judges* of the *fitneſs* of the conduct of God, than we are competent judges of the divine nature; and can no more tell what is, or is not *infinitely wiſe* in God, than we can raiſe ourſelves to a *ſtate* of infinite wiſdom.

So that if the *fitneſs* of actions is founded in the *particular nature* of things and perſons, and the fitneſs of God's actions muſt ariſe from that which is *particular* to his nature, then we have from this argument, the *utmoſt certainty* that the *Rule* or *Reaſons* of God's actions muſt in many caſes be entirely inconceiveable by us, and in no caſes perfectly apprehended; and for this very reaſon, becauſe he is not an *arbitrary being*, that acts by *mere will*, but is governed in every thing he does, by the reaſon and nature of things.

How miſtaken therefore is this author, when he argues after this manner. *If God requires things of us, whoſe fitneſs our reaſon can't prove from the nature of things, muſt he not be an arbitrary being?* For how can that prove God to be an arbitrary agent, which is the neceſſary conſequence of his not being arbitrary?

Suppoſing God not to be an *arbitrary Being*, but to act conſtantly, as the perfections of his own nature make it *fit* and *reaſonable* for him to act, then there is an utter impoſſibility of our comprehending the reaſonableneſs and fitneſs of many of his actions.

For inſtance; look at the *reaſon* of things, and the *fitneſs* of actions, and tell me how they moved God to create mankind in the ſtate and condition they are in. Nothing is more above the reaſon of men, than to explain the reaſonableneſs of God's providence in creating man of ſuch a *form* and *condition*, to go through *ſuch* a ſtate of things as human life is. No revealed myſteries can more exceed the comprehenſion of man, than the ſtate of human life itſelf.

Shew me according to what *fitneſs*, founded in the *nature* of things, God's infinite wiſdom was determined to form you in ſuch a manner, bring you into ſuch a world, and ſuffer and preſerve *ſuch a ſtate* of things,

things, as human life is, and then you may have some pretence to believe no revealed doctrines, but such as your own reason can deduce from the nature of things.

But whilst your own *form*, whilst *Creation* and *Providence* are depths which you cannot thus look into, 'tis strangely absurd to pretend, that God cannot reveal any thing to you as a matter of religion, except your own reason can shew its foundation in the nature and reason of things.

Revelation, you say, is on your account, and therefore you ought to see the *reasonableness* and *fitness* of it. And don't you also say, that God has made you for your *own sake*; ought you not therefore to know the reasonableness and fitness of God's forming you as you are? Don't you say, that providence is for the *sake* of man? Is it not therefore fit and reasonable, in the nature of things, that there should be no *mysteries*, or *secrets*, in providence, but that man should so see its methods, as to be able to prove all its steps to be constantly fit and reasonable?

Don't you say, that the *world* is for the *sake* of man; is it not therefore fit and reasonable that man should see, that the *past* and *present* state of the world has been such as the reason and fitness of things required it should be?

Now if the *imperfect* state of human nature, the *calamities* of this life, the *diseases* and mortality of human bodies, the *methods* of God's continual providence in governing human affairs, are things that as much concern us, as any methods of revealed religion; and if these are things that we cannot explain, according to any *fitness* or *unfitness* founded in the *nature* of things, but must believe a great deal more of the infinite wisdom of God, than we can so explain; have we any reason to think, that God cannot, or ought not to raise us out of this unhappy state of things, help us to an higher order of life, and exalt us to a nearer enjoyment of himself, by any means, but such as our own poor reason can grope out of the nature and fitness of things?

Now what is the reaſon, that all is thus myſterious and unmeaſurable by human reaſon, in theſe matters ſo nearly concerning human nature? 'Tis becauſe God is not an *arbitrary Being*, but does that which the *incomprehenſible perfections* of his own nature, make it *fit* and *reaſonable* for him to do. Do but grant that nothing can be *fit* for God to do, but what is *according* to his own *infinite perfections*: Let but this be the *rule* of his actions, and then you have the *fulleſt* proof, that the fitneſs of his actions muſt be above our comprehenſion, who can only judge of a *fitneſs* according to our *own perfections*; and then we muſt be ſurrounded with myſtery for this very reaſon, becauſe God acts according to a *certain rule*, his own nature.

Again: What is the nature of a human ſoul, upon what *terms*, and in what manner it is *united* to the body, how far it is *different* from it, how far it is *ſubject* to it, what powers and faculties it *derives* from it; are things wherein the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of God, and the *happineſs* of man are deeply concerned. Is it not neceſſary that theſe things ſhould have their foundation in the *reaſon*, and *fitneſs* of things? And yet what natural reaſon, uninſpired from above, can ſhew that this *ſtate* of ſoul and body is founded therein?

Again: The origin of *ſin* and *evil*, or how it entered into the world conſiſtently with the infinite wiſdom of God, is a myſtery of *natural religion*, which reaſon cannot unfold. For we can ſhew from the *reaſon* and *nature* of things, that it was *fit* and *reaſonable*, for the providence of God to ſuffer ſin to enter, and continue in the world? Here therefore the man of natural religion muſt drop his method of reaſoning from the fitneſs of things, and that in an article of the higheſt concern to the moral world, and be as mere a believer, as he that believes the moſt incomprehenſible myſtery of revealed religion.

Now as there have been in the ſeveral ages of the world, ſome *impatient*, *reſtleſs* and *preſuming* ſpirits, who, becauſe they could not in theſe points explain the

the juſtice of God's providence, have taken refuge in horrid *Atheiſm*, ſo they made juſt the ſame *ſober uſe* of their reaſon, as our *modern unbelievers*, who becauſe they can't comprehend, the *fitneſs* and *neceſſity* of certain Chriſtian doctrines, reſign themſelves up to an hardened *infidelity*. For it is juſt as reaſonable to allow of no myſteries in *Revelation*, as to allow of no myſteries in *Creation* and *Providence*.

And whenever this writer, ſhall think it proper, to attack *natural* religion with as much freedom, as he has *revealed*, he need not enter upon any *new* hypotheſis, or *different* way of reaſoning. For the ſame turn of thought, may ſoon find materials in the natural ſtate of man, for as large a bill of complaints againſt natural religion, and the myſteries of providence, as is here brought againſt revealed doctrines.

To proceed: If the *fitneſs of actions is founded in the nature and relations of beings*, then nothing can be fit for God to do, but ſo far as it is fit for the *Governor of all created beings*, whether on earth, or in any other part of the univerſe; and he cannot act fitly towards mankind, but by acting as is fit for the Governor of all beings.

Now what is fit for the *Governor* of *all created* nature to do in this or that particular part of his creation, is as much above our reaſon to *tell*, as it is above our power to *govern* all beings. And how mankind ought to be governed, with relation to the whole creation, of which they are ſo ſmall a part, is a matter equally above our knowledge; becauſe we know not how they are a part of the whole, or what relation they bear to any other part, or how their ſtate affects the whole, or any other part, than we know what beings the whole conſiſts of.

Now there is nothing that we know with more certainty than that God is Governor of the *whole*, and that mankind are a *part* of the whole; and that the uniformity and harmony of divine providence, muſt ariſe from his infinite wiſe government of the *whole*; and therefore we have the utmoſt certainty,

that we are *vaſtly incompetent* judges of the fitneſs or unfitneſs of any methods that God uſes in the government of ſo ſmall a part of the univerſe, as mankind are.

Again: If the *fitneſs of actions is founded in the relations of beings to one another*, then the fitneſs of the actions of God's providence over mankind, muſt be in many inſtances altogether incomprehenſible to us.

For the relation which God bears to mankind, as their *all-perfect Creator* and continual *Preſerver*, is a relation that our reaſon conceives as imperfectly, and knows as little of, as it does of any of the divine attributes. When it compares it to that of a *Father* and his children, a *Prince* and his ſubjects, a *Proprietor* and his property, it has explained it in the beſt manner it can, but ſtill has left it as much a *ſecret*, as we do the divine nature when we only ſay, it is *infinitely* ſuperior to every thing that is *finite*.

By the natural light of our reaſon we may know with certainty, ſeveral *effects* of this relation, as that it puts us under the care and protection of a wiſe, and juſt, and merciful providence, and demands from us the higheſt inſtances of humility, adoration and thankſgiving. But what it is in its own nature, what kind of ſtate, it is to exiſt in and by God, what it is to ſee by a *light* that is his, to act by a power from him, to live by a *life* in him; are things as incomprehenſible to reaſon, *left to itſelf*, as what it is to be in the *third heavens*, or to hear words that cannot be uttered.

But if this relation conſiſts in theſe *inconceivable* things, in a communication of *life*, *light* and *power*, if theſe are enjoyed in God, and in ourſelves, in a manner not to be explained by any thing that we ever heard, or ſaw; then we muſt neceſſarily be poor judges of what is fit for God to require of us, becauſe of this *relation*. It teaches us nothing but the ſuperficialneſs of our own knowledge, and the unfathomable depths of the divine perfections.

How little this writer has conſidered the nature of this *relation* between God and man, may be ſeen

by

by the following paragraphs. *The Holy Ghoſt*, ſays he, *cannot deal with men as rational creatures, but by propoſing arguments to convince their underſtandings, and influence their wills, in the ſame manner as if propoſed by other agents.* As abſurd, as to ſay, God cannot *create* us as rational Beings, unleſs he creates us in the ſame *manner*, as if we were created by other agents. For to ſuppoſe that other agents can poſſibly act upon our underſtanding, and will, in the *ſame manner* that God does; is as groſs an abſurdity, as to ſuppoſe that other agents can create us in the ſame manner that God creates us.

And to *confine* the manner of the Holy Ghoſt's acting upon us, to the manner of our acting upon one another by *arguments* and *ſyllogiſms*, is as great a weakneſs, as to *confine* the manner of God's creating us, to the manner of our making a *Statute* with *tools* and *inſtruments*.

But he proceeds and ſays, *For to go beyond this, would be making impreſſions on men, as a ſeal does on wax; to the confounding of their reaſon, and their liberty in chuſing; and the man would then be merely paſſive, and the action would be the action of another being acting upon him, for which he could be no way accountable.* *

Here you ſee the Holy Spirit has but theſe two poſſible ways of acting upon men, it muſt either only propoſe an argument, juſt as a man may propoſe one, or it muſt act like a *ſeal upon wax*.

I only aſk this writer, Whether God communicates *life*, and *ſtrength*, and *underſtanding*, and *liberty of will* to us, only as men may communicate any thing to one another? or as a ſeal acts upon wax? If ſo, it may be granted, that the Holy Ghoſt cannot act upon us any other way.

But if it muſt be affirmed, that we do, by a continual influx from God, enjoy all theſe powers, and receive the continuance of all theſe faculties from him; not as men receive things from one another, nor as *wax* receives the *impreſſion* of the *ſeal*, but in a way as much above our conception, as creation is above our power; if we have all our *power* of acting, by

 a *con-*

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a *continual communication* from him, and yet are free agents, have all our *light* from him, and yet are *accountable intelligent* Beings; then it muſt be great weakneſs to affirm, that the Holy Ghoſt cannot act upon us in the ſame manner: For it would be ſaying, God cannot act upon us as he does act upon us.

The ſhort of the matter is this. Either this *writer* muſt affirm, that our *rational nature*, our *underſtanding faculties*, our *power* of action, our *liberty* of will, muſt *neceſſarily* ſubſiſt without the *continual action* of God upon them, or elſe he muſt grant, that God can *act* upon our *underſtandings* and *wills* without making us as *merely paſſive* as the wax under the ſeal.

This writer ſays, *Though the relation we ſtand in to God, is not artificial, as moſt are amongſt men—yet this does not hinder, but that we may know the end he had in being related to us as Creator and Governor, and what he requires of his creatures and ſubjects.* But how are we to know this? *This*, ſays he, *the Divine Nature*, which *contains in it all perfection and happineſs, plainly points out to us.* *

If he had ſaid, ſince God muſt act over us as Creator and Governor, according to his own infinite *perfection and happineſs*, therefore his conduct over us may be *very myſterious*, he had drawn a *plain* concluſion. But he proves all to be plain, becauſe God is to govern us according to ſomething that is not plain, according to his own *incomprehenſible nature.*

His argument therefore proceeds thus. God muſt govern us according to his own *infinite perfection and happineſs*; but we *do not know* what his infinite perfections and happineſs are:

Therefore we *plainly know* how he is to govern us.

Now if this writer is capable of taking ſuch an argument as this to be demonſtrative, it is no wonder that all his principles of religion are founded upon demonſtration.

But if he knows no more of what ariſes from the *Relation* between God and his creatures, than he has here

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here demonſtrated, he might be very well content with ſome farther knowledge from Divine Revelation.

It is becauſe of this incomprehenſible Relation between God and his creatures, that we are unavoidably ignorant of what God may juſtly require of us either in a ſtate of *innocence* or *ſin*. For as the fitneſs of actions between Beings *related*, muſt reſult from their reſpective Natures, ſo the incomprehenſibility of the Divine Nature, on which the Relation between God and man is founded, makes it utterly impoſſible for mere natural reaſon to ſay, what *kind* of *homage*, or *worſhip*, he may *fitly* require of man in a ſtate of *innocence*; or what *different* worſhip and homage he may, or muſt require of men, as *ſinners*.

And to appeal to the infinite perfections of God, as *plainly pointing this out*, is the ſame extravagance, as to appeal to the *incomprehenſibility* of God as a plain proof of our comprehending what God is.

As to the obligations of moral or ſocial duties, which have their foundation in the ſeveral relations we bear to one another, theſe are the ſame in the ſtate of *innocence* or *Sin*, and we know that we truly act according to the Divine Will, when we act according to what theſe relations require of us.

But the queſtion is, What diſtinct kind of *Homage*, or *Service*, or *Worſhip*, God may require us to render to Him, either in a ſtate of *innocence* or *ſin*, on account of that Relation he bears to us as an all-perfect Creator and Governor?

But this is a queſtion that God alone can reſolve.

Human Reaſon cannot enter into it, it has no principle to proceed upon in it. For as the *neceſſity* of Divine Worſhip, ſo the *particular manner* of it, muſt have its reaſon in the Divine Nature.

Sacrifice, if conſidered only as an *human invention*, could not be proved to be a reaſonable ſervice. Yet conſidered as a *Divine Inſtitution*, it would be the greateſt folly not to receive it as a reaſonable ſervice. For as we could ſee no reaſon for it, if it was of human invention, ſo we ſhould have the greateſt reaſon

ſon to comply with it, becauſe it was of Divine Appointment. Not as if the Divine Appointment altered the *nature* and *fitneſs* of things; but becauſe nothing has the *nature* and *fitneſs* of Divine Worſhip, but as it is of Divine Appointment.

Man therefore, had he continued in a ſtate of Innocence, and without revelation, might have lived in an awful fear, and pious regard of God, and obſerved every duty both of moral and civil life, as an act of obedience to him. But he could have no foundation either to invent any particular *manner* of Divine Worſhip himſelf, or to reject any that was appointed by God, as *unneceſſary*. It would have been ridiculous to have pleaded his innocence, as having no need of a Divine Worſhip. For who can have greater reaſon, or be fitter to worſhip God, than innocent Beings? It would have been more abſurd, to have objected the ſufficiency of their reaſon; for why ſhould men reject a *revealed manner* of Divine Worſhip, becauſe God had given them reaſon of their own, ſufficient for the duties of ſocial and civil life?

And as reaſon in a ſtate of innocence and perfection, could not have any pretence to appoint the manner of Divine Worſhip, ſo when the ſtate of innocence was changed for that of ſin, it became more difficult for bare reaſon to know what kind of Worſhip could be acceptable to God from ſinners.

For what the *Relation* betwixt God and ſinners makes it fit for God to require or accept of them, cannot be determined by human reaſon.

This is a *new State*, and the foundation of a *new Relation*, and nothing can be fit for God to do in it, but what has its *fitneſs refulting* from it. We have nothing to help our conceptions of the forementioned *relative Characters* of God, as our *Governor* and *Preſerver*, but what we derive from our idea of human *Fathers* and *Governors*: Which idea only helps us to comprehend theſe *relations*, juſt as our idea of human power helps us to comprehend the *Omnipotence* of God. For a father or governor, no more repreſents

repreſents the *ſtate* of God as our *Governor* and *Preſerver*, than our living in our Father's *family*, repreſents the *manner* of our living in God.

Theſe relations are both very plain, and very myſterious; they are very plain, as to the *reality* of their exiſtence; and highly myſterious and inconceivable, as to the *manner* of their exiſtence.

That which is *plain*, in theſe relative characters of God, plainly ſhews our obligations to every inſtance of *duty*, *homage*, *love* and *gratitude*.

And that which is *inconceivable* in them, is a ſolid foundation of that *profound humility*, *awful reverence*, *internal piety* and *tremendous ſenſe* of the divine Majeſty, with which devout perſons think of God, and aſſiſt at the *offices* of religion. Which excites in them a higher zeal for doctrines and inſtitutions of divine revelation, than for all things human; that fills them with reverence for all *things*, places, and offices, that are either by divine or human authority, appointed to aſſiſt their deſired intercourſe with God.

And if ſome people, by a *long* and *ſtrict* attention to *reaſon*, and the *fitneſs* and *unfitneſs* of things, have at laſt arrived at a demonſtrative certainty, that all theſe ſentiments of piety and devotion, are mere *bigotry*, *ſuperſtition*, and *enthuſiaſm*; I ſhall only now obſerve, that *youthful extravagance*, *paſſion*, and *debauchery*, by their own *natural tendency*, without the aſſiſtance of any other guide, ſeldom fail of making the ſame diſcovery. And though it is not reckoned any reflection upon *great wits*, when they hit upon the ſame thought, yet it may ſeem ſome diſparagement of that *reaſon* and *philoſophy*, which teaches *old men* to think the ſame of religion, that *paſſion* and *extravagance* teach the young.

To return: As there is no ſtate in human life, that can give us a true idea of any of the foremention ed relative characters of God, ſo this relative ſtate of God towards ſinners is ſtill leſs capable of being comprehended by any thing obſervable in the relations, betwixt a judge and criminals, a *creditor* and

and his debtors, a *phyſician* and his patients, a father or prince, and their diſobedient children and ſubjects.

For none of theſe ſtates ſeparately, nor all of them jointly conſidered, give us any full idea, either of the *nature* and *guilt* of ſin, or how God is to deal with ſinners, on the account of the relation he bears to them.

To aſk, whether *ſin* hath ſolely the *nature* of an offence, againſt a prince or a father, and ſo is pardonable by mere goodneſs; whether it is like an *error* in a *road* or *path*, and ſo is entirely at an end, when the right path is taken; whether its guilt hath the nature of a debt, and ſo is capable of being diſcharged, juſt as a debt is; whether it affects the ſoul, as a *wound* or *diſeaſe* affects the body, and ſo ought only to move God to act as a good phyſician? All theſe queſtions are as vain, as to aſk, whether knowledge in God is really *thinking*, or his nature a real *ſubſtance*. For as his knowledge and nature cannot be ſtrictly defined, but are capable of being ſignified by the terms *thinking* and *ſubſtance*, ſo the nature of ſin is not *ſtrictly repreſented* under any of theſe characters, but is capable of receiving *ſome repreſentation* from every one of them.

When ſin is ſaid to be an offence againſt God, it is to teach us, that we have infinitely more reaſon to dread it on *God's account*, than to dread any offence againſt our parents, or governors.

When it is compared to a *debt*, it is to ſignify, that our ſins make us accountable to God, not in the *ſame manner*, but with the ſame certainty, as a debtor is anſwerable to his creditor; and becauſe it has ſome likeneſs to a debt, that of ourſelves we are not able to pay.

When it is compared to a *wound*, or diſeaſe, it is not to teach us, that it may as juſtly and eaſily be healed as bodily wounds, but to help us to conceive the greatneſs of its evil; that, as diſeaſes bring death to the body, ſo ſin brings a worſe kind of death upon the ſoul.

Since

Since therefore the *nature* and *guilt* of ſin can only ſo far be known, as to make it highly to be *dreaded*, but not ſo known as to be *fully* underſtood, by any thing we can compare to it:

Since the *relation* which God bears to *ſinners*, can only be ſo known, as to make it highly reaſonable to proſtrate ourſelves before him, in every inſtance of humility and penitence; but not ſo fully known as to teach us, in what manner, God muſt deal with us: It plainly follows, that if God is not an *arbitrary* Being, but acts according to a *fitneſs reſulting* from this relation, he muſt, in this reſpect, act by a *rule* known only to himſelf, and ſuch as we cannot *poſſibly* ſtate from the *reaſon* and *nature* of things.

For if the nature of things, and the fitneſs of actions reſulting from their relations, is to be the rule of our reaſon, then *Reaſon* muſt be here at a full ſtop, and can have no more knowledge to proceed upon, in ſtating the *nature*, the *guilt*, or proper *atonement* of ſin in men, than of ſin in *Angels*.

For *Reaſon*, can no more tell us, what the *guilt* of ſin is, what *hurt* it does us, how far it *enters* into, and *alters* our very nature, what *contrariety to*, and *ſeparation* from God, it neceſſarily brings upon us, or what *ſupernatural* means are, or are not, neceſſary to aboliſh it; our *reaſon* can no more tell this, than our *ſenſes* can tell us, what is the *inward*, and what is the *outward* light of Angels.

Aſk Reaſon, what *effect* ſin has upon the ſoul, and it can tell you no more, than if you had aſked, what effect the *omnipreſence* of God has upon the ſoul.

Aſk reaſon, and the nature of things, what is, or ought to be, the *true nature* of an atonement for ſin, how far it is like *paying* a *debt*, or *healing* a *wound*, or how far it is different from them? And it can tell you no more, than if you had aſked, what is the *true degree* of power that *preſerves* us in exiſtence, how far it is *like* that which at firſt created us, and how far it is *different* from it.

All theſe enquiries are, by the nature of things, made impoſſible to us, ſo long as we have no light but

but from our own natural capacities, and we cannot take upon us to be *philoſophers*, in theſe matters, but by deſerting our Reaſon, and giving ourſelves up to *viſion* and *imagination*.

And we have as much authority from the nature of things, to appeal to *hunger* and *thirſt*, and *ſenſual pleaſure*, to tell us *how* our ſouls ſhall live in the beatific preſence of God, as to appeal to our *reaſon* and *logic*, to demonſtrate how ſin is to be *atoned*, or the ſoul *prepared*, and *purified*, for future happineſs.

For God has no more given us our Reaſon to *ſettle* the nature of an atonement for ſin; or to find out what can, or cannot, take away its guilt, than he has given us *ſenſes* and *appetites* to ſtate the nature, or diſcover the ingredients, of future happineſs.

And he who rejects the *atonement* for ſins made by the Son of God, as *needleſs*, becauſe he cannot prove it to be *neceſſary*, is as extravagant, as he that ſhould deny that God created him by his *only Son*, becauſe he did not remember it. For our memory is as proper a faculty to tell us, whether God at firſt created us, by his only Son, as our *Reaſon* is to tell us, whether we ought to be reſtored to God, with, or without the mediation of Jeſus Chriſt.

When therefore this writer ſays, *Can any thing be more evident, than that if doing evil be the only cauſe of God's diſpleaſure, the ceaſing to do evil, muſt take away that diſpleaſure?**

Juſt as if he had ſaid, if converſing with a *leper* has been the only cauſe of a man's getting a *leproſy*, muſt not departing from him, be the removal of the *leproſy?* For if any one, gueſſing at the *guilt* of ſin, and its *effects* on the ſoul, ſhould compare it to a *leproſy* in the body, he can no more ſay, that he has reached its *real*, *internal* evil, than he, that comparing the happineſs of heaven to a crown of glory, can be ſaid to have deſcribed its real happineſs.

This *writer* has no occaſion to appeal to the nature of things, if he can be thus certain about things, whoſe nature is not only obſcure, but *impoſſible* to be

* Page 4.

be known. For it is as impoſſible for him to know the *guilt* and *effects* of ſin, as to know the ſhape of an Angel. It is as impoſſible to know by the mere light of reaſon, what God's *diſpleaſure* at ſin is, what *ſeparation* from ſinners it implies, or how it *obliges* God to deal with them; as to know what the internal eſſence of God is. Our author therefore has here found the utmoſt degree of evidence, where it was *impoſſible* for him to have the *ſmalleſt degree* of knowledge.

If a man, having *murdered* twenty of his fellow creatures, ſhould afterward be ſorry for it, and wiſh that he had a power to bring them to life again, or to create others in their ſtead, would his ceaſing to kill, and wiſhing he had a power to create others in their ſtead, put him juſt in the *ſame ſtate* with God, as if he had never murdered a man in his life? But unleſs this can be ſaid, it cannot be ſaid that repentance is ſufficient to put a man in the *ſame ſtate*, as if he never had ſinned.

This writer has two more objections againſt the atonement for ſin, made by Jeſus Chriſt. *Firſt*, as it is an *human ſacrifice*, *which nature itſelf abhors*; and which was looked upon as the great abomination of idolatrous *pagan* worſhip.

The *cruelty*, *injuſtice*, and *impiety*, of ſhedding human blood in the ſacrifices of the *pagans* is fully granted; but *reaſon* cannot thence bring the ſmalleſt objection againſt the ſacrifice of Chriſt.

For how can reaſon be more diſregarded, than in ſuch an argument as this? The *pagans* were unjuſt, cruel, and impious, in offering human blood to their falſe gods; therefore the true God cannot receive any *human* ſacrifice, or allow any perſons to die, as a puniſhment for ſin.

For, if no human ſacrifice can be fit for God to receive, becauſe human ſacrifices, as parts of *pagan* worſhip, were unjuſt and impious; then it would follow, that the *mortality*, to which all mankind are appointed by God, muſt have the *ſame cruelty* and *injuſtice* in it. Now that *death* is a puniſhment for ſin,

and that all mankind are by death offered as a *sacrifice* for sin, is not only a doctrine of revealed religion, but the plain dictate of reason. But if reason must acknowledge the death of all mankind, as a sacrifice for sin, then it can have no just objection against the sacrifice of Christ, *because* it was *human*.

I need not take upon me to prove the *reasonableness* of God's procedure in the *mortality* of mankind; Revelation is not under any necessity of proving this; because it is no difficulty that arises from revelation, but equally belongs to natural religion; and both of them must acknowledge it to be reasonable; not because it can be proved to be so from the nature of things, but is to be believed to be so, by faith and piety.

But if natural religion, will not suffer us to think it *inconsistent* with the justice and goodness of God, to appoint all mankind victims to death on the account of sin, then *natural* religion, can have no objection against the sacrifice of Christ, as it is an *human sacrifice*.

And all that *revelation* adds to *natural* religion, on the point of *human* sacrifice, is only this; the knowledge of *one*, that gives *merit and effect*, to all the rest.

Secondly, It is objected, that the atonement made by Jesus Christ, represents God as punishing the *innocent* and acquitting the *guilty*; or, as punishing the innocent *instead* of the guilty.

But this proceeds all upon mistake: for the atonement made by Jesus Christ, though it procures pardon for the guilty, yet it does not acquit them, or excuse them from any punishment, or suffering for sin, which *reason could impose upon them*. Natural religion calls men to repentance for their sins: the atonement made by Jesus Christ does not acquit them from it, or pardon them without it; but calls them to a *severer* repentance, than natural religion, alone, prescribes.

God

God therefore does not by this proceeding, ſhew his *diſlike* of the *innocent* and his *approbation* of the *wicked*.

For how can God be thought to puniſh our bleſſed Saviour out of *diſlike*, if his ſufferings are repreſented of ſuch infinite merit with him? Or how can he ſhew thereby his *approbation* of the guilty, whoſe repentance is not *acceptable* to him, till recommended by the infinite merits of Jeſus Chriſt?

As to the fitneſs of our Lord's ſufferings, as God and man; and the *nature* and *degree* of their worth; reaſon can no more enter into this matter, or *prove* or *diſprove* any thing about it, than it can enter into the ſtate of the whole creation, and ſhew, how it could, or could not, be in the whole, better than it is.

For you may as well aſk any of your *ſenſes*, as aſk your *reaſon* this principal queſtion, *Whether any ſupernatural means be neceſſary for the atonement of the ſins of mankind?* Or, ſuppoſing it neceſſary, whether the *mediation*, *death*, and *interceſſion* of Jeſus Chriſt, as God and man, be that true ſupernatural means?

For as the fitneſs or unfitneſs of any *ſupernatural* means, for the atonement of ſin, muſt reſult from the *incomprehenſible relation* God bears to ſinners, as it muſt have ſuch *neceſſity*, and *dignity*, as this relation *requires*, it neceſſarily follows, that if God acts according to *this relation*, the *fitneſs* of his actions cannot be according to our comprehenſion.

Again: Suppoſing ſome *ſupernatural means* to be neceſſary, for deſtroying the guilt and power of ſin; or that the *ſufferings*, and *interceſſion*, of the Son of God incarnate, is that true ſupernatural means, it neceſſarily follows, that a revelation of ſuch, or any other *ſupernatural* means, cannot poſſibly be made obvious to our reaſon and ſenſes, as the things of human life, or the tranſactions amongſt men are; but can only be ſo revealed, as to become juſt occaſions of our *faith*, *humility*, and *pious reſignation*, to the divine wiſdom and goodneſs.

For, to ſay that ſuch a thing is *ſupernatural*, is only ſaying, that it is ſomething, which, by the *neceſſary ſtate* of our own nature, we are as incapable of knowing, as we are incapable of ſeeing *ſpirits*.

If therefore ſupernatural things are by the letter of Scripture ever revealed to us, they cannot be revealed to us as they are in their *own nature:* for if they could, ſuch things would not be *ſupernatural*.

If an *angel* could appear to us, as it is in its own nature, then we ſhould be *naturally* capable of ſeeing angels; but, becauſe our nature is not *capable* of ſuch a ſight; therefore, when *angels* appear to men, they muſt appear, not as they are in themſelves, but in ſome *human* or *corporeal* form.

It is juſt thus, when any *divine* matter is revealed by God; it can no more poſſibly be revealed to us, as it is in its *own nature*, than an *Angel* can appear to us, as it is in its own nature; but ſuch ſupernatural matter can only be revealed to us, by being repreſented to us, by its likeneſs to ſomething, that we already *naturally* know.

Thus revelation teaches us this *ſupernatural* matter; that Jeſus Chriſt is making *perpetual interceſſion for us in heaven:* For Chriſt's *real ſtate*, or *manner* of exiſtence with God in heaven, in regard to his Church, cannot, as it is in its *own nature*, be deſcribed to us; it is in this reſpect ineffable, and incomprehenſible. And therefore, this high and inconceivable manner of Chriſt's exiſtence with God in heaven, in regard to his church, is revealed to us under an idea, that gives us the trueſt repreſentation of it, we are capable of.

But if any one ſhould thence infer, that the Son of God muſt therefore either be always upon his knees, or *proſtate* in ſome humble form of a ſupplicant, he would make a very weak inference.

Becauſe this revealed Idea of Chriſt, as a perpetual Interceſſor in heaven, is only a comparative repreſentation of ſomething, that cannot be *directly* and *plainly* known as it is in its own nature; and only teaches us, how to believe ſomething, though imper-

imperfectly, yet *truly* of an incomprehenſible matter.

Again: When it is by the letter of Scripture revealed to us, that the bleſſed Jeſus is the one *Mediator* between God and man; that he is the *Atonement*, the *Propitiation*, and *Satisfaction* for our ſins: Theſe expreſſions only teach us *as much* outward knowledge of ſo great a myſtery, as *human* language can repreſent. But they do not teach us the *perfect* nature of Chriſt's *ſtate* between God and ſinners. For that being a *ſupernatural* matter, cannot by any outward words be revealed to us as it is in its *own Nature*, any more than the *eſſence* of God can be made *viſible* to our eyes of fleſh.

But theſe expreſſions teach us thus much with certainty, that there is in the *ſtate* of Chriſt between God and ſinners, ſomething infinitely and inconceivably beneficial to us; and *truly anſwerable* to all that we mean by *mediation*, *atonement*, *propitiation*, and *ſatisfaction*.

And though the *real*, *internal manner*, of this mediation and atonement, as it is in its *own nature*, is *incomprehenſible*, yet this does not leſſen our knowledge of the *truth* and *certainty* of it, any more than the *incomprehenſibility* of the divine nature, leſſens our *certainty* of its real exiſtence.

And as our idea of God, though conſiſting of incomprehenſible perfections, helps us to a real and certain knowledge of the divine nature; and though all myſterious, is yet the ſolid foundation of all piety; ſo our idea of Jeſus Chriſt, as our *mediator* and *atonement*, though it be incomprehenſible as to its real nature, yet helps us to a *certain* knowledge of Chriſt, as our *mediator* and *atonement*; and, though full of myſtery, is yet full of motives to the higheſt piety, love, and gratitude unto God.

All objections therefore, raiſed from any difficulties about the nature of *atonements*, *propitiations*, and *ſatisfactions*, as theſe words are uſed in common language, are vain, and entirely groundleſs.

For all theſe objections proceed upon this ſuppoſition, that *atonement*, or *ſatisfaction*, when attributed

to Jeſus Chriſt, ſignify neither *more* nor *leſs*, than when they are uſed as terms in *human laws* or in *civil* live; take away this ſuppoſition, and all objections are entirely removed with it.

To return: I have granted this writer his great principle, *that the relations of things and perſons, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, is the ſole rule of God's actions:* And I have granted it upon this ſuppoſition, that it thence follows, that God muſt act according to his *own nature*; and therefore nothing could be fit for God to do, but what had the reaſon of its fitneſs in his own nature: and if ſo, then the *rule* of his actions could not fall within our comprehenſion. And conſequently, *reaſon alone*, could not be a *competent judge* of God's proceedings; or ſay, what God might, or might not, require of us: and therefore I have, plainly turned his main argument againſt himſelf, and made it fully confute that doctrine, which he intended to found upon it.

But though I have thus far, granted the *nature* and *relations* of things and beings, to be the rule of God's actions, becauſe that plainly ſuppoſes, that his *own nature* muſt be the rule of his actions; yet ſince our *author*, and other modern oppoſers of revealed doctrines of religion, hold it in another ſenſe, and mean by it, I know not what *eternal*, *immutable* reaſons and relations of things, *independent* of any being, and which are a *common rule and law of God and man*, I entirely declare againſt it, as an erroneous and groundleſs opinion.

Thus, when this writer ſays, *If the relations between things, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, be not the ſole rule of God's actions, muſt he not be an arbitrary being?* As he here means ſome *eternal*, *immutable relations*, *independent* of God; ſo, to ſuppoſe, that God cannot be a *wiſe* and *good* being, unleſs ſuch eternal, independent relations, be the *ſole rule* of his actions, is as erroneous, as to affirm, that God cannot be *omniſcient*, unleſs *mathematical demonſtrations* be his *ſole manner* of knowing all things. And it is juſt as reaſonable to fix God's knowledge *ſolely* in mathematical demonſtrations, that we may thence be aſſured of his *infal-*

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lute knowledge, as to make I know not what independent relations of things, the *ſole rule* of his actions, that we may thence be aſſured, he is not *arbitrary*, but a wiſe and good Being.

And we have as ſtrong reaſons to believe God to be, in the higheſt degree, *wiſe* and *good*, without knowing on what, his wiſdom and goodneſs is *founded*; as we have to believe him to be *omniſcient*, and *eternal*, without knowing on *what*, his *omniſcience* is founded; or to *what*, his *eternity* is owing. And we have the ſame reaſon to hold it a vain enquiry, to aſk what *obliges* God to be *Wiſe* and *Good*, as to aſk what obliges him to be *Omniſcient*, or *Eternal*.

And as it would be abſurd to aſcribe the *Exiſtence* of God to *any cauſe*, or found it upon any *independent relations* of things, ſo it is the ſame abſurdity, to aſcribe the infinite wiſdom and goodneſs of God to *any cauſe*, or found them upon any independent relations of things.

Nor do we any more *loſe* the notion, or *leſſen* the certainty of the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, becauſe we cannot ſay on *what* they are founded, than we *loſe* the notion of God, or render his exiſtence *uncertain*, becauſe it cannot be founded on any thing.

And as in our account of the exiſtence of things, we are obliged to have recourſe to a Being, whoſe exiſtence muſt not be aſcribed to *any cauſe* becauſe every thing cannot have a cauſe, no more than every thing can be created, ſo in our account of *wiſdom* and *Goodneſs*, there is the ſame neceſſity of having recourſe to an infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs, that never *began* to be, and that is as different as to its *manner* of exiſtence, from all other wiſdom and goodneſs, that have a beginning, as the *exiſtence* of God is *different* from the exiſtence of the creatures.

But if it be neceſſary to hold, that there is an infinite wiſdom and goodneſs that *never began* to be, then it is as neceſſary to affirm, that ſuch wiſdom and goodneſs can no more be *founded* upon the *relations* of things, than the *unbeginning exiſtence* of God can be

founded

founded upon the exiſtence of things. And to ſeek for any *reaſons* of a wiſdom and goodneſs that was always in the *ſame infinite* ſtate, is like ſeeking the cauſe of that which can have no cauſe, or aſking *what* it is that *contains* infinity.

When therefore this writer ſaith, *Infinite wiſdom can have no commands, but what are founded on the unalterable reaſon of things*; * he might as juſtly have ſaid, an *infinite Creator* can have no power of creating, but what is founded on the *unalterable nature* of creatures.

For the *reaſon* of things, is juſt as unalterable, as the *nature* of creatures. And if the reaſons and relations of things are nothing elſe but their *manner* of exiſtence, or the *ſtate* of their nature, certainly the relations of things muſt have the ſame *beginning*, and the ſame *alterable* or unalterable nature, as the things from whence they flow. Unleſs it can be ſaid, that a thing may exiſt in *ſuch a manner*, though it does not exiſt at all.

When therefore he ſays again, *That the will of God is always determined by the nature and reaſon of things*; † It is the ſame as if he had ſaid, the *omnipotence* of God is always determined by the *nature* of *cauſes* and *effects*. For as all cauſes and effects are what they are, and *owe* their *nature* to the omnipotence of God, ſo the relations of things are what they are, and owe their nature to the wiſdom and will of God.

Nor does this dependance of the relations of things on the will of God, deſtroy the nature of relations, or make them doubtful, any more than the exiſtence of things depending on the *power* of God, deſtroys the certainty of their exiſtence, or renders it doubtful. For as God cannot make things to exiſt, and not to exiſt at the ſame time, though their exiſtence depends upon his power, ſo neither can he make things to have ſuch relations, and yet not to have ſuch relations at the ſame time, though their relations depend upon his will.

So that the aſcribing the relations of things to the will of God, brings no uncertainty to thoſe duties of life, which flow from ſuch relations, but leaves the ſtate

* *Page* 217. † *Page* 65.

ſtate of nature with all its relations, and the duties which flow from them, in the greateſt certainty, ſo long as nature itſelf is continued; and when that either *ceaſes entirely*, or is only *altered*, it is not to be wondered at, if all its relations ceaſe, or are altered with it.

Our author ſays, *Dare any one ſay, that God's laws are not founded on the eternal reaſon of things?* *

I dare ſay it with the ſame aſſurance, as that his *exiſtence* is not founded on the *eternal exiſtence* of things. And that it is the ſame extravagance to ſay, that God's laws are founded on the *eternal reaſons* of things, as to ſay, that his *power* is founded on the *eternal capacities* of things. For the *capacities* of things have juſt the ſame *ſolidity* and *eternity*, as the relations of things have, and are juſt ſuch *independent realities* as they are: And are juſt the ſame *proper materials* to found the omnipotence of God upon, as the relations of things are, to found his infine wiſdom upon.

And as we can ſay, that the *omnipotence* of God in preſerving and ſupporting the creation, will certainly act *ſuitably* to itſelf, and *conſiſtent* with that omnipotence which firſt made things be what they are, and put nature into ſuch a ſtate as it is in; ſo we can ſay, that the *infinite wiſdom* of God in giving laws to the world, will act *ſuitably* to itſelf, and *conſiſtent* with that wiſdom which at firſt made the *nature* and *relations* of the rational world be what they are.

But tnen as the *omnipotence* of God, though it acts ſuitably to the ſtate of the creation, and the nature of cauſes and effects, which it firſt ordained, yet cannot be ſaid to be founded upon the nature of cauſes and effects, becauſe neither cauſes nor effects have *any nature*, but what they *owe* to omnipotence; ſo the infinite wiſdom of God, though in giving laws to the world, it acts *ſuitably* to the natures and relations of rational beings, yet cannot be ſaid to be *founded* upon ſuch relations, becauſe ſuch relations are

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are the *effects* of the divine wiſdom, and owe their exiſtence to it.

And the *reaſon* or *relations* of things ſhew God's *antecedent* wiſdom, and are effects of it, juſt as the nature of *cauſes* and *effects* ſhew his *antecedent* power, and are the effects of it. And as he is infinitely powerful, but not from the nature of cauſes and effects; ſo he is infinitely wiſe, but not from the *reaſon* and *nature* of things.

Again; if God is *infinite* wiſdom, then his wiſdom cannot be founded on the relations of things, unleſs things *finite*, and relations that began to be, can be the foundation of that wiſdom which is infinite, and could not begin to be.

Therefore to aſk, *what* it is founded upon, when it can have no foundation upon *any thing*, is aſking, what an *independent* being is dependent upon, or *how* that began, which could have *no* beginning?

And to aſk the reaſon or foundation of *any one* of the divine attributes, is the ſame as aſking the reaſon or foundation of them all. And to ſeek for the reaſon or foundation of all the divine attributes, is ſeeking for the *cauſe* of God's exiſtence.

And as we do not come to God's exiſtence, till we come to the *end* of *cauſes*, ſo nothing that is divine, can be attributed to any cauſe.

Nor is it any more a contradiction to ſay, there is ſomething whoſe nature is without any cauſe or foundation of its exiſtence, than to ſay, ſomething exiſts without ever *beginning* to exiſt. For as nothing can have a beginning, but as it proceeds from ſome cauſe; ſo that which can have no beginning, can have no cauſe. If therefore the divine wiſdom ever *began* to be *infinite*, and we could know when that beginning was, we ſhould have ſome pretence to ſearch for *that*, upon which its infinity was *founded*; but if it never could begin to be, then to ſeek for its reaſon, or foundation, is ſeeking for its beginning.

This writer affirms, that God's wiſdom and goodneſs muſt be founded on the nature and reaſon of things, otherwiſe it could not be proved, that God was not an *arbitrary being*.

Now

Now to ſeek for reaſons to prove that God is not an arbitrary being, that is, a being of the *higheſt freedom* and *independency*, that does every thing according to his *own will* and *pleaſure*, is as vain, as to ſeek for reaſons to prove, that *all things* are not the effect of his *will*. For if every thing beſides God, received its exiſtence from him; if every thing that exiſts, is the effect of his will, and he can do nothing, but becauſe he wills the doing it, muſt he not be free and arbitrary in as *high* a *manner*, as he is powerful?

This *writer* ſays, *It is not in our power to love the Deity, whilſt we conſider him to be an arbitrary being, acting out of humour and caprice.* *

But if God's *will* is as *eſſentially* oppoſite to *humour* and *caprice*, as his *omnipotence* is to *weakneſs and inability*; then it is as abſurd to ſuppoſe, that God muſt act according to humour and caprice, becauſe he acts according to his own will, as to ſuppoſe that he muſt act with inability, becauſe he acts by his omnipotence.

And if the will of God, *as ſuch*, is in the higheſt ſtate of perfection, then we have the *higheſt reaſon* to love and adore God, becauſe he is arbitrary, and acts according to his *own all-perfect will*. And if it be aſked, what it is that makes the will of God *all-perfect*, it may as well be aſked, what it is that makes him omnipotent, or makes him to exiſt. For, as we have not found out a God, till we have found a being that has no *cauſe*; ſo we have not found the *will* of God, till we have found a *will*, that has no *mover*, or *director*, or *cauſe* of its perfection. For that *will* which never began to be, can no more be any thing, but what it is in itſelf, than it can begin to be.

That which makes people imagine, that *will alone* is not ſo adorable, is becauſe they conſider it as a blind imperfect faculty that wants to be directed. But what has ſuch a will as this to do with the *will* of God?

For if the will of God is as *perfect* a *will*, as his omniſcience is a *perfect knowledge*, then we are as ſure, that

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that the *will* of God cannot want any direction, or *will* any thing amiſs, as we are, that his omniſcience cannot need any information, or fall into any miſtake. And if the *will* of God wanted any direction or government, it is impoſſible it ſhould have it; for having no ſuperior, it could only be ſo governed, becauſe it *willed* it, and therefore muſt be always under its own government.

All the perfection therefore that can be aſcribed to God, muſt be aſcribed to his *will*, not as if it was the production of his will, (for nothing in God is produced) but as eternally, inherent in it.

And as God's will has thus all the perfection of the divine nature, and has no rule, or reaſon, or motive to any goodneſs, that comes from it, but its own *nature* and *ſtate* in God; ſo this great will is the only law of all creatures, and they are all to obey and conform to it, for this reaſon, becauſe it is the will of God.

Nothing has a *moral* reaſon, or fitneſs to be done, but becauſe it is the will of God that it ſhould be done.

It may be aſked, Is there then no *reaſon* or *nature* of things? Yes; as certainly as there are things. But the nature and reaſon of things, conſidered *independently* of the divine will, have no more *obligation* in them, than a *divine worſhip* conſidered independently of, and without any regard to the *exiſtence* of God. For the *will* of God is as abſolutely neceſſary to found all *moral obligation* upon, as the exiſtence of God is neceſſary to be the foundation of religious worſhip. And the fitneſs of *moral obligations*, without the *will* of God, is only like the fitneſs of *religious* worſhip without the *exiſtence* of God.

And it is as juſt to ſay, that he deſtroys the *reaſon* of religion, who founds it upon the nature and exiſtence of God, as to ſay, he ſaps the foundation of moral obligations, who founds them upon the will of God. And as religion cannot be ſolidly defended, but by ſhewing its connexion with, and dependence upon God's exiſtence; ſo neither can moral obliga-

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tions be aſſerted with reaſon, but by ſhewing them to be the will of God.

It may again be aſked, Can God make that fit in itſelf, which is in *itſelf abſolutely* unfit to be done?

This queſtion conſiſts of improper terms. For God's will no more makes actions to be fit *in themſelves*, than it makes *things* to exiſt *in, or of themſelves*. No things, nor any actions have any *abſolute* fitneſs, of and in *themſelves*.

A *gift*, a *blow*, the making a *wound*, or *ſhedding* of *blood*, conſidered in themſelves, have no *abſolute* fitneſs, but are fit or unfit according to a variety of accidental circumſtances.

When therefore God by his will makes any thing fit to be done, he does not make the thing fit in *itſelf*, which is juſt in the *ſame ſtate* conſidered in *itſelf*, that it was before, but it becomes fit for the perſon to do it, becauſe he can only be happy, or do that which is fit for him to do, by doing the will of God.

For inſtance, the *bare eating* a fruit, conſidered in *itſelf*, is neither fit nor unfit. If a fruit is appointed by God for our food, then it is as fit to eat it, as to preſerve our lives. If a fruit is poiſonous, then it is as unfit to eat it, as to commit ſelf-murder. If eating of a fruit is prohibited by God, then it is as unfit to eat as to eat our own damnation.

But in none of theſe inſtances is the eating or not eating, conſidered in *itſelf fit* or *unfit*: but has all its fitneſs, or unfitneſs, from ſuch circumſtances, as are entirely owing to the will of God.

Suppoſing therefore God to require a perſon to do ſomething, which according to his preſent circumſtances, *without* that command, he ought not to do, God does not make that which is *abſolutely* unfit in *itſelf*, fit to be done; but only adds *new circumſtances* to an action, that is neither fit, nor unfit, moral, nor immoral in *itſelf*, but *becauſe* of its circumſtances.

Again, it is objected, *If there is nothing right or wrong, good or bad, antecedently and independently of the will of God, there can then be no reaſon, why God ſhould will, or command one thing, rather than another.*

It is anſwered, *firſt*, That all goodneſs, and all poſſible perfection, is as *eternal* as God, and as eſſential to him as his exiſtence. And to ſay, that they are either *antecedent* or *conſequent*, *dependent* or *independent* of his will, would be equally abſurd. To aſk therefore, whether there is not ſomething right and wrong, antecedent to the will of God, is as abſurd, as to aſk for ſome antecedent cauſe of his exiſtence. And to aſk, how God can be good if there is not ſomething good independently of him, is aſking how he can be infinite, if there be not ſomething infinite independently of him. And to ſeek for any other *ſource* or *reaſon* of the divine goodneſs, beſides the divine nature, is like ſeeking for ſome external cauſe and help of the divine omnipotence.

The goodneſs and wiſdom, therefore, by which God is wiſe and good, and to which all his works of wiſdom and goodneſs are owing, are neither *antecedent*, nor *conſequent* to his will.

Secondly, Nothing is more certain, than that all *moral obligations* and *duties* of creatures towards one another, *began* with the exiſtence of moral creatures. This is as certain, as that all corporeal qualities and effects, *began* with the exiſtence of bodies.

As therefore nothing has the nature of a cauſe or effect, nothing has any quality of any kind in bodies, but what is entirely owing to matter ſo created and conſtituted by the *will* of God; ſo no actions have any *moral qualities*, but what are wholly owing to that ſtate and nature in which they are created by the will of God.

Moral obligations therefore of creatures have the ſame *origin*, and the *ſame reaſon*, that natural qualities and effects have in the corporeal world, *viz.* the ſole will of God. And as in a different ſtate of matter, bodies would have had different qualities and effects; ſo in a different ſtate of rational beings, there would be different moral obligations, and nothing could be right or good in their behaviour, but what began then to be right and good, becauſe they then began to exiſt in ſuch a ſtate and condition of life. And as their ſtate and condition could have no other

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cauſe or reaſon of its exiſtence, but the ſole will of God, ſo the cauſe and reaſon of right and wrong in ſuch a ſtate, muſt be equally owing to the will of God.

The pretended *abſolute independent fitneſſes*, or *unfitneſſes* of actions therefore *in themſelves*, are vain *abſtractions*, and philoſophical *jargon*, ſerving no ends of morality, but only helping people to wrangle and diſpute away that ſincere obedience to God, which is their only happineſs. But to make theſe imaginary *abſolute fitneſſes* the *common law* both of God and man, is ſtill more extravagant. For if the *circumſtances* of actions give them their *moral nature*, ſurely God muſt firſt be in our circumſtances, before that which is a law to us, can be the ſame law to him.

And if a father may require that of a ſon, which his ſon, becauſe of his *different ſtate*, cannot require of his brother; ſurely that which God may require of us, may be as different from that which a father may require of a ſon, as God is different from a father.

Again, if God is as much under a law as we are, then he is as much under authority; for law can no more be without authority, than without a law-giver. And if God and we are under the *ſame law*, we muſt be under the *ſame authority*.

But as God cannot be under any law in common with us his creatures, any more than he can be of the ſame rank or order with us; ſo neither can he be under any law at all, any more than he can be under any authority at all.

And though God is not to be looked upon as an *arbitrary being*, in the ſenſe of this author, who will not diſtinguiſh arbitrary from *humour* and *caprice*; yet in a true ſenſe of the word, when applied to God, he muſt be affirmed to be an arbitrary being; that acts only from himſelf, from his *own will*, and according to his *own pleaſure*.

And we have no more reaſon to be afraid to be left to a God without a law, or to be left to his will and pleaſure, than to be left under the protection and care of a being, that is all love, and mercy, and

goodneſs. For as the exiſtence of God, as ſuch, neceſſarily implies the exiſtence of all perfection; ſo the will of God, as ſuch, neceſſarily implies the *willing* every thing, that *all perfection* can will.

And as the exiſtence of God, becauſe it contains all perfection, cannot for that reaſon have any external cauſe; ſo the will of God, becauſe it is *all perfection*, cannot, for that reaſon, have any external *rule* or *direction*. But his own will is wiſdom, and his wiſdom is his will. His goodneſs is arbitrary, and his arbitrarineſs is goodneſs.

But this writer does not only thus bring God into this ſtate of law and obligation with us, but makes farther advances in the ſame kind of errors.

Hence, ſays he, *we may contemplate the great dignity of our rational nature, ſince our reaſon for* kind, *though not for degree, is of the* ſame nature *with* that of God's *.

Here you ſee *our reaſon*, that is, our *faculty* of reaſoning, (for reaſon cannot be called *ours* in any other reſpect,) has no other difference from reaſon as it is in God, but that of degree. But what greater abſurdity can a man fall into, than to ſuppoſe, that a being whoſe exiſtence had a beginning but a few years ago, differs only in degree from that which could not poſſibly have a beginning; or that a *dependent* and *independent* being, ſhould not be different in *kind*, but *only* in degree?

For to ſay, that the faculties of a dependent and independent being, may be of the ſame kind, is as flat a contradiction, as to ſay, the ſame kind of thing may be dependent, and independent.

Reaſon belongs to God and man, juſt as *power*, *exiſtence*, *life*, and *happineſs*, belong to God and man. And he that can, from happineſs being common to God and man, prove our happineſs to be of the *ſame kind* and nature with God's, may alſo prove reaſon in God and man to be of the ſame kind.

This writer indeed ſays, *Our happineſs is limited*, becauſe *our reaſon is ſo*; and that God has *unlimited happineſs*, becauſe *he alone has unlimited reaſon* †.

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But if that which it *neceſſarily limited*, is different from that which is *neceſſarily unlimited*, then we have proof enough from this very argument, that a reaſon *neceſſarily* limited, cannot be of the *ſame kind* with that reaſon, which is *neceſſarily* unlimited. Unleſs it can be ſaid, that limited and unlimited, finite and infinite, beginning and unbeginning, have no contrariety in *kind*, but only differ, as a *ſhort* line differs from a *long* one.

The truth of the matter is this; Reaſon is in God and man, as power is in God and man. And as the divine power has ſome degree of likeneſs to human power, yet with an *infinite* difference from it: ſo that perfection which we call *reaſon* in God, has ſome degree of likeneſs to reaſon as it is in man, yet is *infinitely* and beyond all conception different from it.

And as our enjoyment of power is ſo limited, ſo imperfect, ſo ſuperficial, as to be ſcarce ſufficient to tell us, what power is, much leſs what omnipotence is; ſo our ſhare of reaſon is ſo ſmall, and we enjoy it in ſo imperfect a manner, that we can ſcarce think or talk intelligibly of it, or ſo much as define our own faculties of reaſoning.

CHAP. II.

Shewing from the relation *between God and man, that human reaſon cannot be a competent judge of the* fitneſs *and* reaſonableneſs *of God's proceedings with mankind, either as to the* time, *or* matter, *or* manner *of an external revelation.*

AS our author has laid it down for an undeniable rule of God's actions, that he muſt, if he be a wiſe and good being, act according to the relation

he ſtands in towards his creatures; I proceed upon this principle, to prove the incapacity of *human reaſon*, to judge *truly* of God's proceedings in regard to divine revelation.

For if the fitneſs of actions *reſults from the nature and relations* of beings, then the *fitneſs* of God's actions, as he is an *omniſcient creator* and *governor*, to whom every thing is *eternally fore-known*, over beings endued with *our freedom of will*, muſt be to us incomprehenſible.

We are not ſo much as capable of comprehending by our reaſon, the *poſſibility* of this relation, or how the fore-knowledge of God can conſiſt with the free agency of creatures. We know that God foreknows all things, with the ſame certainty as we know there is a God. And if *ſelf-conſciouſneſs* is an infallible proof of our own exiſtence, it proves with the ſame certainty the freedom of our will. And hence it is, that we have a full aſſurance of the conſiſtency of God's fore-knowledge with freedom of will.

Now this *incomprehenſible* relation between an *eternally fore-knowing creator* and *governor*, and his free creatures, is the *relation* from whence ariſes the fitneſs of God's providence over us. But if the *relation* itſelf is incomprehenſible, then thoſe actions that have their fitneſs from it, muſt ſurely be incomprehenſible. Nothing can be fit for God to do, either in *Creation* or *Providence*, but what has its fitneſs founded in his *fore-knowledge* of every thing that would follow, from *every kind* of creation, and *every manner* of providence: But if nothing can be fit, but becauſe it is according to *this fore-knowledge* of *every thing* that would follow from *every kind* of creation, and *every manner* of providence; then we have the utmoſt certainty, that the fitneſs of God's actions as a *fore-knowing Creator*, and *Governor* of free agents, muſt be founded upon *reaſons* that we cannot poſſibly know any thing of.

And a child that has but juſt learned to ſpeak, is as well qualified to ſtate the fitneſs of the laws of matter

matter and motion by which the whole vegetable world is preſerved, as the wiſeſt of men is qualified to comprehend, or ſtate the fitneſs of the methods, which a *fore-knowing providence* obſerves over free agents. For every reaſon on which the fitneſs of ſuch a providence is founded, is not only *unknown* to us, but by a neceſſity of nature *impoſſible* to be known by us.

For if the *fitneſs* of God's acting in this, or that manner, is founded in his fore-knowledge of every thing that would *happen*, from *every poſſible way* of acting, then it is impoſſible for us to know the reaſons, on which the fitneſs of his actions is founded, as it is impoſſible for us to be omniſcient.

Who can tell what *different kinds* of rational creatures, diſtinguiſhed by variety of natures, and faculties, it is fit and reaſonable for God to create, becauſe he eternally foreſaw what would be the *effect* of ſuch different creations? Who can explain the *fitneſs* of that vaſt *variety* there is amongſt rational creatures of the *ſame ſpecies*, or ſhew that all their different faculties ought to be as they are? And yet the *fitneſs* of this providence has its *certain reaſon* in the divine fore-knowledge, and it could not be fit, but becauſe of it.

Who can tell what *degree* of reaſon rational creatures ought to enjoy, or what degrees of *new* and *revealed* knowledge it is fit and reaſonable for God to give, or not give them, becauſe they ſeem, or ſeem not to themſelves to want it, are diſpoſed, or not diſpoſed to receive it? For as mankind cannot tell why it was fit and reaſonable for God to create them of ſuch a *kind*, and *degree*, as they are of; ſo neither can they tell how God ought, or ought not to add to their natural knowledge, and make them as *differently accountable* for the uſe of revealed rules of life, as for the uſe of their natural faculties.

And as the reaſon why God created them of *ſuch* a *kind*, and with *ſuch faculties*, was becauſe of his own fore-knowledge of the *effects* of ſuch a creation; ſo if ever he does reveal to them any *ſupernatural* knowledge, both the doing it, the *time*, and *matter*, and

manner

manner of it, muſt have their fitneſs in his own *eternal fore-knowledge* of the effects of ſuch a revelation.

The reaſons therefore on which the fitneſs of this or that revelation, *why* or *when*, of *what matter*, in *what manner*, and to whom it is to be made, muſt, from the nature and reaſon of things, be as unſearchable by us, as the reaſons of *this* or *that* creation of rational beings, at ſuch a *time*, of ſuch a *kind*, in ſuch a *manner*, in ſuch a *ſtate*.

This may help us to an eaſy ſolution of the unreaſonable queſtions, which this writer puts in this manner.

" If the deſign of God in communicating any thing of himſelf to men was their happineſs, would not that deſign have obliged him, who at all times alike deſires their happineſs, to have at all times alike communicated it to them? If God always acts for the good of his creatures, what reaſon can be aſſigned, why he ſhould not from the beginning have diſcovered ſuch things as make for their good, but defer the doing it till the time of *Tiberius*; ſince the ſooner this was done, the greater would his goodneſs appear?" *

And again, " How is it conſiſtent with the notion of God's being univerſally benevolent, not to have revealed it to all his children, when all had equal need of it? Was is not as eaſy for him to have communicated it to all nations, as to any one nation or perſon? Or in all languages, as in one?" +

Now all this is fully anſwered, by our author's own great and fundamental principle.

" For if the relations between things and perſons, and the fitneſs reſulting from thence, be the ſole rule of God's actions, ||" as he expreſly affirms; then the *ſole rule* or reaſon of God's revealing any thing to any men, at any time, muſt have its *fitneſs reſulting* from the divine fore-knowledge of the effects of *ſuch* a revelation, at *ſuch* a time, and to *ſuch* perſons. If God does not act thus, he does not act according to the relation betwixt a *fore-knowing Creator*, and his free creatures. But if he does act according to a

fitneſs

* *Page* 393. + *Page* 196. || *Page* 28.

fitneſs reſulting from this *relation*, and makes, or does not make revelations, according to his own fore-knowledge of the fitneſs of times and perſons for them; then to aſk how a God, always equally good, can make a revelation at any time, and not make the *ſame* at *all* times, is as abſurd as to aſk, how a God, always equally good, can reveal that at one time, becauſe it is a *proper* time for it, and not reveal it at every other time, though improper for it.

God's goodneſs, directed by his own fore-knowledge of the *fitneſs* of times, and of the *ſtate* and *actions* of free agents, deferred a certain revelation to the time of *Tiberius*, becauſe he *foreſaw* it would then be an act of the *greateſt* goodneſs, and have its *beſt effects* upon the world: To aſk therefore, *what reaſon can be aſſigned*, why ſo good a revelation was not *ſooner*, or even from the *beginning* made to the world, is aſking, why God ſhould act, according to his *own fore-knowledge* of the *ſtate* and *actions* of *free agents*, and order all things, according to a fitneſs reſulting from ſuch a fore-knowledge?

Theſe queſtions ſuppoſe, that if God ſhewed his *goodneſs* to mankind by a revelation at ſuch time, he muſt be *wanting* in goodneſs before that time, becauſe he did not make it *ſooner*; whereas if his deferring it till *ſuch* a time, was owing to his *fore-knowledge* of the actions and ſtate of free agents, and becauſe it would then have its *beſt effects*, then God is proved to be equally good before he made it, for this very reaſon, becauſe he did not make it before its *proper* time: and he had been wanting in goodneſs, if he had not *deferred* it till that time.

Now this appealing to God's fore-knowledge of the ſtate and actions of *free agents*, as the cauſe of all that is particular in the *time* and *manner* of any revelation, and deducing its fitneſs from thence, cannot be ſaid to be *begging the queſtion*, but is reſolving it directly according to the *rule*, which this writer lays down for God to act by: That "the relations between things and perſons, *and* the fitneſs reſulting from thence, muſt be the ſole rule of God's actions."

But

But if this is the *ſole rule*, then God in giving any revelation, muſt act as the *relation* betwixt a *fore-knowing* Creator and his *free* creatures requires; and his actions muſt have their *fitneſs reſulting* from his fore-knowledge of the *ſtate* and *actions* of free agents. And if this is God's ſole rule, then to aſk why *this* or *that* revelation *only* at *ſuch* a time, is to aſk why God *only* does that which is *fit* for him to do? And to aſk, why not the ſame revelation at any other time, is aſking why God does not do that, which it is *not fit* for him to do?

This writer aſks, "How it is conſiſtent with the notion of God's being univerſally benevolent, not to have revealed it to all his children, who had equal need of it?" But if they had *equal need* of it, yet if they were not *equally fit* for it, but prepared only to have their *guilt* increaſed by it, and ſo be expoſed to a greater damnation; then God's goodneſs to them is manifeſt, by with-holding ſuch information from them, and reſerving it for thoſe that would be made happier by it.

Judas, *Pontius Pilate*, and the *Jews* that called for our Saviour's crucifixion, had *equal need* of a Saviour with thoſe that believed in him. *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida* wanted the light of the goſpel as much as thoſe that received it. And if the reſt of the world had been, at that time, as much indiſpoſed for the light of the Goſpel, as they were, God's goodneſs had been greater to that age, if he had reſerved the light of the goſpel till a better age had ſucceeded.

So that this argument, founded on the *equal need* of all, or former ages, has no force, unleſs it could be ſhewn, that the ſame revelation made to any of theſe former ages, would have produced all thoſe good effects, which God foreſaw would follow, from its being reſerved for ſuch a *particular time* and *ſtate* of things and perſons.

He aſks again, "Was it not as eaſy for God to have communicated it to all nations, as to any one nation or perſon? Or in all languages, as in any one?" This argument is built upon this ſuppoſition,

That

That God does things becauſe they are *eaſy*, or forbears things becauſe they are *difficult* to be performed. For it can be no argument, that God ought to have revealed ſuch things to *all* nations or perſons, becauſe it was as *eaſy* to him, as to do it to *any one* nation or perſon; unleſs it be ſuppoſed, that the *eaſineſs* of a thing is a reaſon why God does it, and the difficulty of a thing a reaſon why he does not do it. But if this ſuppoſition be very abſurd, then the argument founded upon it muſt be liable to the ſame charge.

But if God does things, not becauſe they are eaſy, but becauſe they are infinitely good and fit to be done, then the reaſon why God has afforded different revelations, to different ages and perſons, is this, That his *manner* of revealing every thing, might be *worthy* of his own *fore-knowledge* of the effects of it, and that every thing that is particular in the *time* or *manner* of any revelation, might have its *fitneſs reſulting* from the *relation* betwixt a good God and his creatures, whoſe *changing* ſtate, *different* conduct, *tempers* and *actions*, are all eternally fore-known by him.

Again, it is objected, that a divine revelation muſt either be the effect of *juſtice*, or elſe of *mercy* and *free goodneſs*; but in either of theſe caſes it ought to be *univerſal*; for juſtice muſt be done to all. But if it is the effect of *mercy* and *free goodneſs*, this writer aſks, "How a being can be denominated merciful and good, who is ſo only to a few, but cruel and unmerciful to the reſt?" *

It is anſwered, That there is neither *juſtice* in God without mercy, nor *mercy* without juſtice; and to aſcribe a *revelation* to either of them ſeparately, in *contradiſtinction* to the other, has no more reaſon in it, than to aſcribe the *creation* ſeparately either to the *Wiſdom*, or *Power* of God, in contradiſtinction to the other.

Secondly, A divine revelation is not owing barely to the *juſtice* or *free goodneſs* of God, but to the goodneſs,

* *Page* 401.

neſs, mercy, and juſtice of God, *governed* and *directed* by his eternal fore-knowledge of all the effects of every revelation, at any, or all times.

God ordains a revelation in this, or that manner, time, and place; not becauſe it is a *juſtice* that he cannot refuſe, not becauſe it is matter of *favour* or *free* goodneſs, and therefore may be given in any manner at pleaſure; but becauſe he has the whole *duration* of human things, the whole *race* of mankind, the whole *order* of human changes and events, the whole *combination* of all cauſes and effects of human tempers, all the *actions* of free agents, and *all the conſequences* of every revelation, plainly in his ſight; and according to this eternal fore-knowledge, every revelation receives every thing that is *particular* in it, either as to *time*, *matter*, *manner*, or *place*.

All complaints therefore about that which is *particular*, or *ſeemingly* partial in the time and manner of any revelation, are very unjuſtifiable; and ſhew that we are diſcontent at God's proceedings, becauſe he acts like himſelf, does what is *beſt* and *fitteſt* to be done, and governs the world, not according to our weak imaginations, but according to his own infinite perfections.

We will not allow a Providence to be *right*, unleſs we can comprehend the reaſonableneſs of all its ſteps; and yet it could not *poſſibly* be right, unleſs its proceedings were as much *above* our comprehenſion, as our wiſdom is *below* that which is infinite.

For if the *relations* of *things*, and *perſons*, and the *fitneſs* reſulting from thence, be the *rule* of God's actions; then all the revelations that come from God, muſt have their *fitneſs* reſulting from the relation his fore-knowledge bears to the *various ſtates*, *conditions*, *tempers*, and *actions* of free agents, and the *various effects* of every manner of revelation.

But if God cannot act worthy of himſelf in any revelation, unleſs he acts according to a fitneſs reſulting from this relation; then he muſt act by a *rule* that lies out of our ſight, and his Providence

in this particular muſt be incomprehenſible to us; for this very reaſon, becauſe it has that very fitneſs, wiſdom and goodneſs in it, that it ought to have.

CHAP. III.

Shewing how far human reaſon is able to judge of the reaſonableneſs, truth and certainty of divine Revelation.

THE former chapter has plainly ſhewn, from the ſtate and relation between God and man, that we muſt be ſtrangers to the true reaſons on which a divine revelation is founded, both as to its *time*, *matter*, and *manner*.

But it is here objected, "If God by reaſon of his own perfections muſt be thus myſterious and incomprehenſible, both in the matter and manner of divine revelation; How can we know what revelations we are to receive as divine? How can we be blamed for rejecting this, or receiving that, if we cannot comprehend the reaſons on which every revelation is founded, both as to its matter and manner?"

If a man may be blameable, or commendable, for his right or wrong belief of a God; then a man may be accountable for a right or wrong belief of ſuch matters, as are in their own nature too myſterious for his comprehenſion. And though a man knows the reaſons of a divine revelation, either as to its *matter* or *manner*, as imperfectly as he knows the divine nature; yet he may be as liable to account for believing *falſe revelations*, as for *idolatry*; and as full of guilt for rejecting a *true revelation*, as for denying the only *true God*.

Secondly, Though we are insufficient for comprehending the *reasons*, on which the particular *matter* or *manner* of any divine revelation is founded; yet we may be so far sufficient judges, of the reasons for *receiving* or not *receiving* a revelation as divine, as to make our conduct therein justly accountable to God.

For if God can shew a revelation to proceed from him, by the *same undeniable* evidence, as he shews the *creation* to be his work; if he can make himself as visible in a *particular extraordinary* manner, as he is by his *general* and *ordinary* providence; then, though we are as unqualified to judge of the mysteries of a *revelation*, as we are to judge of the mysteries in *creation* and *providence*; yet we may be as fully obliged to receive a revelation, as to acknowledge the creation to be the work of God; and as highly criminal for disbelieving it, as for denying a general Providence.

Adam, *Noah*, *Abraham*, and *Moses*, were very incompetent judges, of the reasons on which the particular revelations made to them were founded; but this did not hinder their sufficient assurance, that such revelations came from God, because they were proved to come from God in the same manner, as the creation is proved to be the work of God.

And as *Adam* and *Noah* must see every thing wonderful, mysterious, and above their comprehensions, in those new worlds into which they were introduced by God; so they could no more expect, that he should require nothing of them, but what they would enjoin themselves, than that their own *frame*, the *nature* of the creation, the *providence* of God, or the *state* of human life, should be exactly as they would have it.

And if their posterity will let no *messages* from heaven, no *prophecies* and *miracles* persuade them, that God can call them to any duties, but such as they must enjoin themselves; or to the belief of any doctrines, but such as their own minds can suggest; nor to any methods of changing their present state of

weakness

weakneſs and diſorder for a happy immortality, but ſuch as ſuit their own *taſte*, *temper*, and way of reaſoning; it is becauſe they are grown ſenſeleſs of the myſteries of creation and providence with which they are ſurrounded, and forget the awful prerogative of infinite wiſdom, over the weakeſt, loweſt rank of intelligent beings.

And as we can only know what is worthy of God in creation, by knowing what he has created; ſo we can no other way know what is worthy of God to be revealed, but by a revelation. And he that pretends independently of any revelation, to ſhew *how*, and in what manner God ought to make a revelation worthy of himſelf, is as great a *Viſionary*, as he that ſhould pretend independently of the creation, or without learning any thing from it, to ſhew how God ought to have proceeded in it, to make it worthy of himſelf. For as God alone, knows how to create worthy of himſelf, and nothing can poſſibly be proved to be worthy to be created by him, but becauſe he has already created it; ſo God alone knows what is worthy of himſelf in a revelation, and nothing can poſſibly be proved worthy to be revealed by him, but becauſe he has already revealed it.

Hence we may ſee how little this *writer* is governed by the *reaſon* and *nature* of things, who proceeds upon this as an undeniable principle, that we could not know a revelation to be divine, unleſs we knew, antecedently to revelation, what God could teach or require of us by it. Thus, ſays he, "Were we not capable by our reaſon of knowing what the divine goodneſs could command, or forbid his creatures, antecedently to any external revelation, we could not diſtinguiſh the true inſtituted religion, from the *many* falſe ones." *

Juſt as wild and viſionary, as if it was ſaid, Were we not capable by our reaſon of knowing what kind or orders of beings God *ought* to create *independently* of any thing we learn from the creation, we could

* *Page* 66.

never prove this or that creation to proceed from him. Did we not, antecedently to facts and experience, know by our own reaſon what ought to be the method and manner of divine providence, we could never prove that the providence which governs nations and perſons is a divine providence.

Again, He proceeds to ſhew, that a revelation from God cannot contain any thing, but what human reaſon can prove from the nature of things; becauſe if God could require any thing more of us, than what our own reaſon could thus prove, he muſt require *without* reaſon, and then there is an end of all religion.

Now this argument proceeds thus; If God does not act according to the *meaſure* of *human* reaſon, he cannot act according to *reaſon itſelf*. If he requires any thing more of us, than what we *think* the nature of things requires of us, then he cannot act according to the nature of things. If his wiſdom is in any matters of revelation *greater* than ours; if it is not in every thing he reveals *meaſurable* by ours, it cannot be wiſdom at all, much leſs can it be infinite wiſdom.

That is, if he is *more powerful* than we are, he cannot be *omnipotent*; if he is *more perfect* than we are, he cannot be *all perfection*; if he acts upon *greater*, or *higher*, or *more* reaſonable motives than we do, he cannot be a *reaſonable* being.

Now if theſe abſurdities are not plain and manifeſt to every common underſtanding, it is in vain to diſpute about any thing; but if they are, then it is as plain, this writer's great argument againſt Chriſtianity, and firſt principle of his *rational religion*, is in the ſame ſtate of undeniable abſurdity.

Thus ſays he, "Natural religion takes in all thoſe duties which flow from the reaſon and the nature of things."* That is, natural religion takes in all thoſe things that bare human reaſon can diſcover from the nature of things. This is granted; but what follows? Why, ſays he, "Conſequently, was there an

* *Page* 114.

an inſtituted religion which differs from that of nature, its precepts muſt be arbitrary, as not founded on the nature and reaſon of things, but depending on mere will and pleaſure, otherwiſe it would be the ſame with natural religion. †

Here you ſee all the abſurdities juſt mentioned, are expreſly contained in this argument, God is all *humour*, and *caprice*, if his revelation is not ſtrictly, in every reſpect, the ſame with human reaſon. That is, he is *without* wiſdom, *without* reaſon, if his wiſdom and reaſon exceed ours. He has *no reaſon*, nor *wiſdom*, if his reaſon and wiſdom are *infinite*.

Secondly, This argument, if it were allowed, leads directly to *atheiſm*. For if a revelation cannot be divine, if it contains any thing myſterious, whoſe fitneſs and neceſſity cannot be explained by human reaſon, then neither *creation* nor *providence* can be proved to be divine, for they are both of them more myſterious than the Chriſtian revelation.

And if every thing is *arbitrary*, whoſe *fitneſs and expedience* human reaſon cannot *prove* and *explain*, then ſurely an *inviſible over-ruling providence* that orders all things in a manner, and for reaſons, known only to itſelf; that ſubjects human life, and human affairs, to what changes it pleaſes; that confounds the beſt-laid deſigns, and makes great effects ariſe from folly and imprudence; that gives not the race to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong; that brings good men into affliction, and makes the wicked proſperous; ſurely ſuch a providence muſt be highly arbitrary.

And therefore if this argument is to be admitted, it leads directly to *atheiſm*, and brings us under a greater neceſſity of rejecting divine providence, on the account of its myſteries, than of rejecting a revelation that is myſterious in any of its doctrines. And if, God cannot be ſaid to deal with us as rational agents, if he requires any thing of us, that our reaſon cannot prove to be neceſſary; ſurely he cannot be ſaid to deal with us as rational agents, if he overrules our perſons and affairs, and diſappoints our

 counſels,

† *Page* 16.

counſels, makes weakneſs proſperous, and wiſdom unſucceſsful, in a *ſecret* and *inviſible* manner, and for reaſons and ends that we have no means of knowing.

There is nothing therefore half ſo myſterious in the Chriſtian revelation, as there is in that *inviſible* providence, which all muſt hold that believe a God. And though there is enough plain in providence, to excite the adoration of humble and pious minds, yet it has often been a rock of *atheiſm* to thoſe, who make their own reaſon the meaſure of wiſdom.

Again, Though the *creation* plainly declares the glory, and wiſdom, and goodneſs of God; yet it has more myſteries in it, more things whoſe fitneſs, expedience, and reaſonableneſs, human reaſon cannot comprehend, than are to be found in Scripture.

If therefore he reaſons right, who ſays, "If there may be ſome things in a true Religion, whoſe fitneſs and expedience we cannot ſee, why not others: Nay, why not the whole; ſince that would make God's laws all of a piece? And if the having of theſe things is no proof of its falſhood, how can any things fit and expedient (which no Religion is without) be a proof of the truth of any one Religion?* *If, I ſay, this is the right reaſoning, then it may be ſaid,* "If there are things in the creation whoſe fitneſs we cannot ſee, why not others: Nay, why not the whole; ſince that would make all God's works of a piece? And if the being of ſuch things as theſe in the creation, is not a proof of its not being divine, How can the fitneſs and expedience of any creation prove that it is the work of God?"

Thus does this argument tend wholly to *atheiſm*, and concludes with the ſame force againſt *creation* and *providence*, as it does againſt revelation.

Either therefore there is nothing in the works of the creation, whoſe fitneſs and expedience cannot be proved; nothing in God's providence over whole nations, and particular perſons, whoſe fitneſs and expedience

* *Firſt Addreſs to the Inhabitants of* London, *Page* 57.

pedience cannot be explained and juſtified by human reaſon, or elſe neither creation nor providence can be aſcribed to God."

The credibility of any external divine revelation with regard to human reaſon, reſts wholly upon *ſuch external* evidence, as is a ſufficient proof of the divine interpoſition. If there be no ſuch external evidence poſſible; if God has no ways of acting ſo *peculiar* to himſelf, as to be a *ſufficient* proof to human reaſon of his action; then no revelation can be ſufficiently proved to be a divine, external revelation from God.

I appeal therefore to the miracles and prophecies on which Chriſtianity is founded, as a ſufficient proof, that it is a divine revelation. And ſhall here conſider, what is objected againſt the ſufficiency of this kind of proof.

1. It is objected, That miracles cannot prove a *falſe*, or *bad* doctrine, to be *true* and *good*; therefore miracles, *as ſuch*, cannot prove the truth of any revelation.

But though miracles cannot prove falſe to be true, or bad to be good; yet they may prove, that we ought to receive ſuch doctrines, both as true and good, which we could not know to be true and good without ſuch miracles. Not becauſe the miracles have any influence upon the things revealed, but becauſe they are God's teſtimony to the truth of that which he reveals.

But our author brings a farther objection againſt this uſe of miracles.

"If, *ſays he*, evil beings can impreſs notions in mens minds as ſtrongly as good being, and cauſe miracles to be done in confirmation of them; is there any way to know to which of the two, notions thus impreſſed are owing, but from their internal marks of wiſdom and goodneſs?"

This objection ſuppoſes, that no miracles, can be a ſufficient proof of the divinity of a revelation; becauſe we do not know the extent of that power, which evil ſpirits have, of doing miracles. But this

this objection is groundleſs. For, granting that we do not know the extent of that power which evil ſpirits may have; yet if we know *enough* of it to affirm, that the *creation* is not the work of evil ſpirits; if we can ſecurely appeal to the creation, as *a ſufficient proof* of God's action and operation; then we are ſecure in appealing to miracles, as a ſufficient proof of a divine revelation.

For, if the creation muſt be allowed to be the work of God, notwithſtanding any *unknown degree* of power in evil ſpirits; if we can as certainly aſcribe it to God, as if there were no *ſuch* ſpirits; then miracles may be as full a proof of the interpoſition of God, as if there were no ſuch ſpirits in being.

I do not aſk, Whether the *ſame divine* perfection is neceſſary to foretel ſuch things as are foretold in Scripture, and work ſuch miracles as are there related, as is neceſſary to *create?* I do not aſk, Whether any power leſs than divine can do ſuch things? I only aſk, Whether there is any certainty, that the creation is the work of God? Whether we can be ſure of the divine operation, from the exiſtence of that creation? Or, Whether we are in any *doubt* or *uncertainty* about it, becauſe we do not know the *degree* of power, that may belong to evil ſpirits?

For if it can be affirmed, that the creation is the work of God, notwithſtanding our uncertainty about the degree of power that may belong to evil ſpirits; then we have the ſame certainty, that the *prophecies* and *miracles* recorded in Scripture, are to be aſcribed to God, notwithſtanding our uncertainty of the power of evil ſpirits.

For every reaſon for aſcribing the creation to God, is the ſame reaſon for aſcribing ſuch miracles and prophecies to God; and every argument againſt the certainty of thoſe miracles and prophecies coming from God, is the ſame argument againſt the certainty of the creation's being the work of God; for there cannot be more or leſs certainty in one caſe than in the other.

For, if evil ſpirits have ſo the creation in their hands, that by reaſon of their power over it, *no*

miracles

miracles can prove the operation of God, then the operation of God cannot be proved from the creation itſelf.

For the creation cannot be proved to be the operation of God, unleſs it can be proved that God *ſtill preſides* over it.

And if *all that* which is extraordinary and miraculous may be accounted for, without the interpoſition of God; then nothing that is ordinary and common according to the courſe of nature, can be a proof of the action of God. For there can be no reaſon aſſigned, why that which is *ordinary* ſhould be aſcribed to God, if all that is, or has been, or can be miraculous, may be aſcribed to evil ſpirits.

Either therefore it muſt be ſaid, that there are, or may be miracles, which cannot be the effects of evil ſpirits; or elſe nothing that is ordinary and common can be a proof of the operation of God. For if nothing miraculous can be an undeniable proof of God's action, nothing created can be a proof of it.

The matter therefore ſtands thus: There are, and may be miracles, that cannot be aſcribed to evil ſpirits, without aſcribing the creation to them; and which can no more be doubted to come from God, than we can doubt of his being the creator of the world. There may be miracles therefore, which, are as full a proof of the *truth* of that which they atteſt, as the creation is of the *fitneſs* of that which is created.

And though the *matter* of a revelation is to be attended to, that we may fully underſtand it, and be rightly affected with it; yet the reaſon of our receiving it, muſt reſt upon that *external authority*, which ſhews it to be of God.

And the authority of miracles, ſufficiently plain and apparent, are of themſelves a full reaſon for receiving a revelation, which both as to its *matter* and *manner*, would not be approved by us without them.

The hiſtory of magical wonders, and extraordinary things done by evil ſpirits, is no objection againſt the

the ſufficiency of that proof, that ariſes from miracles. For the queſtion is not, whether nothing that is extraordinary can be done by evil ſpirits, but whether nothing that is miraculous can, be a proof of its being done by God. For theſe two caſes are very conſiſtent. It may be very poſſible for evil ſpirits, to do things extraordinary in *ſome circumſtances*, as where people enter into contracts with them, and reſign themſelves up to their power, and yet that miracle may in *other circumſtances*, be a ſufficient proof of their being done by God.

And as miracles are the higheſt and moſt undeniable evidence of the truth and divinity of any external revelation; ſo Chriſtianity ſtands fully diſtinguiſhed from all other religions, by the higheſt and moſt undeniable evidence; ſince it has all the proof that the *higheſt ſtate* of miracles can give, and every other religion is without any ſupport from them.

And though this writer, with a boldneſs worthy of himſelf, often puts all *traditional religions* upon a level; yet he might have ſhewn himſelf as much a friend to truth as ſobriety, by aſſerting, that all *arguments* are equally concluſive, all *tempers* equally virtuous, all *deſigns* equally honeſt, and all *hiſtories* and *fables* equally ſupported by evidence of fact.

To give you one inſtance more of this writer's extravagant and inconſiſtent notions.

He makes *reaſon*, or *natural religion*, to be God's *internal revelation*, differing *only* from *external revelation in the manner of its being communicated*. He rejects *external revelation* as unworthy of God, becauſe it has not been ſufficiently made known at *all times*, and in *all places*; yet he ſets up an internal revelation, as worthy of God, which has never been made known to any *one man* of any *time* or *place* in the world. For what one man ever knew that *reaſon* was God's *internal revelation*, to which nothing could be added by any external revelation?

It is a mighty complaint with our author againſt chriſtianity, that ſo much happineſs ſhould be deferred

ferred till the time of *Tiberius*, and that it ſhould be communicated to no greater a part of the world, than chriſtianity hath been. But is not this a *judicious* complaint in the mouth of a perſon, that is ſetting up a religion, that has been communicated to no body but himſelf?

I know nothing that can be ſaid for our author, in excuſe of ſo much confuſion and ſelf-contradiction, unleſs it be the particular hardſhips of his *ſect*. The *free-thinking few* he ſays, *are forced into an outward compliance*; and that which *forces* a man into a ſtate of hypocriſy, may force him into a great deal of confuſion and ſelf-contradiction.

To return: I have from a conſideration of the ſtate of man, and the ſeveral relations which God ſtands in towards his creatures, ſhewn that it is utterly impoſſible for human reaſon to be a competent judge of the fitneſs, or unfitneſs, of all that God may, or may not require of us. The two following chapters ſhall ſtate the nature and perfection of reaſon, as it is a faculty, or principle of action in human nature.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ſtate and nature of reaſon, as it is in man; and how its perfection in matters of religion is to be known.

THIS writer and others, who take to themſelves the names of *free-thinkers*, make their court to the world, by pretending to vindicate the right that all men have, to judge and act according to their own reaſon. Though, I think, the world has

has no more to thank them for on this account, than if they had pretended to assert the right that every man has, to see *only* with his *own eyes*, or to hear *only* with his *own ears*.

For their own reason always did, does, and ever will, govern rational creatures, in every thing they determine, either in speculation or practice. It is not a matter of *duty* for men to use their own reason, but of *necessity*: and it is as impossible to do otherwise, as for a being that cannot act but from choice, to act without choice.

Man is under the same necessity of acting from his own choice, that *matter* is of not acting at all; and a being, whose principle of action is reason and choice, can no more act without it, or contrary to it, than an extended being can be without extension.

All men therefore are equally reasonable in this respect, that they are, and must be, by a *necessity* of nature, equally directed and governed by their own reason and choice.

The dispute therefore betwixt christians and *unbelievers*, concerning reason, is not, whether men are to use their *own reason*, any more than whether they are to see with their *own eyes*; but whether every man's reason must needs guide him, by its *own light*, or must cease to guide him, as soon as it guides him by a light borrowed from revelation? This is the true state of the question, not whether reason is to be followed, but when it is *best* followed? Not whether it is to be our guide, but how it may be made our *safest guide*?

The *free-thinkers*, therefore, rather appeal to the passions, than reason of the people, when they represent the clergy and christianity as enemies to reason, and themselves as friends and advocates for the use of reason.

For christians oppose unbelievers, not because they *reason*, but because they reason *ill*. They receive revelation, not to suppress the natural power, but to give new and heavenly light to their reason;

not

not to take away their right of judging for themſelves, but to ſecure them from falſe judgments.

Chriſtians therefore do not differ from unbelievers in the *conſtant uſe* of their reaſon, but in the *manner* of uſing it: As *virtuous* men differ from *rakes*, not in their deſire of happineſs, but in their manner of ſeeking it.

It appears from what has been ſaid, that every man's own reaſon is his only principle of action, and that he muſt judge according to it, whether he receives, or rejects revelation.

Now although every man is to judge according to the light of his own reaſon, yet his reaſon has very little light that can be called its own. For, as we derive our nature from our parents, ſo that which we generally call *natural knowledge*, or the light of nature, is a knowledge, and light that is made natural to us, by the ſame authority, which makes a certain language, certain cuſtoms, and modes of behaviour, natural to us.

Nothing ſeems to be our own, but a bare capacity to be inſtructed, a nature fitted for any impreſſions; as liable to be made a *Hottentot*, by being born among Hottentots, as to be a *Chriſtian*, by being born among Chriſtians.

It is not my intention by this, to ſignify, that there is not a good and evil, right and wrong founded in the nature of things; but only to ſhew, that we find out this right and wrong, not by any inward ſtrength, that our natural reaſon of itſelf affords, but by ſuch external means, as people are taught articulate language, or the rules of civil life.

Men do not prefer virtue to vice, from a philoſophical contemplation of the fitneſs of the one, and the unfitneſs of the other; but becauſe it is a judgment as early in their minds, as their knowledge of the words, virtue and vice.

And it can no more be reaſonably affirmed, that our knowledge of God and divine things, our opinions of the excellency of this, or that virtue, and of the immortality of our ſouls, are the effects of our natural light; than it can be reaſonably affirmed,

that our living in ſociety, and our articulate language are owing to the light of nature.

For, as all mankind find themſelves in this ſtate before any reaſoning about it; as education, and human authority have taught us language, and accuſtomed us to the rules and manners of a ſocial life; ſo education, and the ſame authority, have planted in our minds, certain notions of God and divine things, and formed us to a belief of our ſoul's immortality, and the expectation of another life.

And mankind are no more left to find out a God, or the fitneſs of virtue, by their own reaſon, than they are left by their own reaſon to find out who are their parents, or to find out the fitneſs of ſpeaking an articulate language.

Now if this is the ſtate of reaſon, as it is in man; if this is all the light that we have from our own nature, a bare capacity of receiving good or bad impreſſions, right or wrong opinions and ſentiments, according to the ſtate of the world we fall into; then we are but poorly furniſhed, to aſſert the *abſolute perfection* of our own reaſon.

If our light is little more than the opinions and cuſtoms of thoſe amongſt whom we live, and it be ſo hard for a man to arrive at a greater wiſdom, than the common wiſdom of the *country* which gave him birth and education; how unreaſonably do we appeal to the perfection of our reaſon, againſt the *neceſſity* and *advantage* of divine revelation?

If we are nothing without the aſſiſtance of men; if we are a kind of fooliſh, helpleſs animals, 'till education and experience have revealed to us the wiſdom and knowledge of our fellow-creatures; ſhall we think ourſelves too wiſe and full of our own light, to be farther enlightened with a wiſdom revealed to us by God himſelf?

This gentleman, ſpeaking of education, ſaith, "Education is juſtly eſteemed a ſecond nature; and its force is ſo ſtrong, that few can wholly ſhake off its prejudices, even in things unreaſonable and unnatural.

All

All that I ſhall add to this account, is, That we are by the condition of human life, neceſſarily ſubjected to this *ſecond nature*, and cannot avoid coming under its power.

And here let me aſk this pleader for the ſufficiency of the light of nature, how thoſe that reſign themſelves up to the light of their *own nature*, ſhall know, whether it is their *firſt*, or their *ſecond* nature that directs them?

Here are, it ſeems, *two natures*; they may be as different as good and evil; yet as they are both *natures*, both *internal light*; how ſhall a man know which he follows? He does not know which was firſt, or why he ſhould call one firſt, and the other ſecond; they are both internal, and without any thing to diſtinguiſh them. And as he is not to reſiſt the motions of nature, or ſtifle its directions; ſo he muſt be as obedient to the directions of the ſecond, as of the firſt nature, becauſe he does not perceive their difference, nor has any means to diſtinguſh their operations.

He therefore that aſſerts the light of nature to be a ſufficient unerring guide in divine matters, ought either to ſhew, that our *ſecond* nature is as *ſafe* a guide as the firſt; or that though it is nature, yet it has no *natural power* over us.

For ſince every man is *neceſſitated* to take upon him a ſecond nature, which he does not *know* to be a ſecond, or *when* it began, or *how far* it has proceeded, or how *contrary* it is to his firſt nature: he that would prove the light of nature to be ſo perfect, that nothing can be added to it, is obliged to prove, that our ſecond nature, which we receive by education, has the ſame degree of perfection. For ſo far as our ſecond nature is different from the firſt, ſo far it has changed the firſt; and if we are to follow nature excluſive of revelation, we may take *revenge*, *ſelf-murder*, *incontinence*, *ſenſuality*, *pride*, *ſelf-conceit*, and a *contempt* of all things ſacred, to be the true dictates of nature.

For often it happens to people, to be thus educated; ſo if education is a ſecond nature, and nature is to

be eſteemed a *true* and *perfect* guide; a man thus educated, has all his vices made ſo many glorious laws of nature; and through the ſtrength of his natural light, he condemns humility, ſelf-denial, and devotion, as fooliſh bigotry.

This writer ſays, "Natural religion, *that is, the religion of nature*, is a perpetual ſtanding rule for men of the meaneſt, as well as the higheſt capacities, and carries its own evidence with it, thoſe internal, inſeparable marks of truth.* *But if education is a* ſecond nature, *and, as this writer affirms*, has the force of a ſecond nature even in things unreaſonable and unnatural; *then this ſecond nature has not only its natural religion, which is alſo a* perpetual ſtanding rule for men of the meaneſt, as well as the higheſt capacities; which carries its own evidence with it, thoſe internal, inſeparable marks of truth; *but it may alſo have a natural religion, both* unreaſonable and unnatural; *ſince education has the force of nature even in things of this kind.*"

Again; if education has this force of nature even in things unreaſonable and unnatural; if it is alſo abſolutely neceſſary for all men to come under the power of ſome ſecond nature; what can be more vain, than to pretend to ſtate the light, or rectitude of human nature, ſince it muſt be for the moſt part in every man, as the uncertainty, variety, happineſs or unhappineſs of education has rendered it?

And our author can no more tell, what man would be, without education, or what nature would do for thoſe who had no foreign inſtruction, than he can tell what ſort of beings dwell in the moon. And yet he that does not know this, how can he know what the light of nature is in itſelf?

Again to declare the light of nature ſo perfect, as to be incapable of all improvement even by divine revelation, is no leſs an extravagance, than to declare the education of mankind to be perfect in the ſame degree.

For if nature not only wants, but cannot poſſibly avoid education; if this neceſſary unavoidable education

* *Page* 243.

cation becomes another nature, undiſcernible from the firſt; then nothing can poſſibly be affirmed of the perfection of the light of nature, but what muſt be affirmed in the ſame degree of the perfection of education. And he that affirms that mankind have had, at all times, and in all places of the world, the ſame ſufficient, perfect light of nature, muſt affirm, that mankind have had, at all times and in all places of the world, the ſame perfect, unerring education.

When therefore it is juſt, for all people to abide by the abſolute perfection of their education, the infallible light of their ſecond nature, as the unerring ſtandard, of all that is moral, religious, and divine; then it may be juſt to appeal to the natural light of all men, of all ages, and all places, as a ſufficient teacher of all that ought, or ought not to be a matter of religion.

For till it can be ſhewn, that men are not liable to a ſecond nature from education; the ſtate of nature muſt differ all over the world, and in every age of the world, juſt as the light, and advantages of education, have differed in the ſeveral parts, and ages of the world.

In a word, the religious and moral light of our firſt nature, is juſt as great as the firſt ſtrength of infants; and the religious and moral light of our ſecond nature, is juſt as perfect as our education, and as much of our own growth, as the firſt language that we are taught to ſpeak.

May not therefore one juſtly wonder, what it is that could lead any people into an imagination of the abſolute perfection of human reaſon? There ſeems no more in the ſtate of mankind, to betray a man into this fancy, than to perſuade him, that the reaſon of infants is abſolutely perfect. For ſenſe and experience, are as full and ſtrong a proof againſt one, as againſt the other.

But it muſt be ſaid for theſe writers, that they decline all arguments from facts and experience, to give a better account of human nature; but with the ſame juſtice, as if a man was to lay aſide the authority of hiſtory,

hiſtory, to give you a truer account of the life of Alexander.

Their objection againſt revelation is founded upon the pretended ſufficiency and perfection of human reaſon, to teach all men all that is wiſe, and holy, and divine, in religion. But how do they prove this perfection of human reaſon? Do they appeal to mankind as proofs of it? Do they produce any body of men, in this, or any other age, that without any aſſiſtance from revelation, have attained to this perfection of religious knowledge? This is not ſo much as pretended to; the hiſtory of ſuch men is entirely wanting. And yet the want of ſuch a fact as this, has even the force of demonſtration againſt this pretended ſufficiency of natural reaſon.

Becauſe it is a matter not capable of any other kind of proof, but muſt be admitted as certainly true, or rejected as certainly falſe, according as fact and experience bear witneſs for or againſt it.

For an enquiry about the light, and ſtrength, and ſufficiency of reaſon, to guide and preſerve men in the knowledge and practice of true religion, is a queſtion, as *ſolely* to be reſolved by *fact and experience*, as if the enquiry was about the *ſhape* of man's body, or the *number* of his ſenſes. And to talk of a light and ſtrength of reaſon, natural to man, which fact and experience have never yet proved, is as egregious nonſenſe, as to talk of natural ſenſes, or faculties of his body, which fact and experience have never yet diſcovered.

From the bare conſideration of a rational ſoul in union with a body, and bodily paſſions, we can neither prove man to be *ſtrong* or *weak*, *good* or *bad*, *ſickly* or *ſound*, *mortal* or *immortal*: all theſe qualities muſt diſcover themſelves, as the *eye* diſcovers its degree of *ſight*, the *hand* its degree of *ſtrength*.

To enquire therefore, whether men have by nature light ſufficient to guide, and keep them in the true religion; is the ſame appeal to fact and experience, as to enquire, whether men are *mortal*, *ſickly*, or *ſound*; or how far they can *ſee* and *hear*.

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As therefore theſe gentlemen are, in this debate, without any proof, or even pretence of proof, from experience, ſo their cauſe ought to be looked upon to be as vain and romantic, as if they had aſſerted, that men have ſenſes naturally fitted to hear ſounds, and ſee objects at all diſtances, though experience, has, from the creation to this time, proved the quite contrary.

For he that aſſerts the ſufficiency of reaſon, to guide men in matters of religion, is not only without any poſitive proof from experience on his ſide, but has the hiſtory of all ages, for near ſix thouſand years, fully demonſtrating the quite contrary.

If ſome other enquirers into human nature, ſhould affirm, that there is in mankind a *natural inſtinct*, *ſufficient* to make every man, at all times, love every other man, with the *ſame degree* of affection, as he loves himſelf; I ſuppoſe ſuch an opinion would be thought too abſurd to need any confutation. And yet all the abſurdity of it would lie in this, that it affirmed ſomething of the *ſufficiency* of a natural quality in man, which could not be ſupported by a ſingle inſtance of any one man, and was contrary to the experience and hiſtory of every age of the world.

Now this is exactly the caſe of theſe gentlemen: their opinion has neither more nor leſs abſurdity in it: they only affirm ſuch a ſufficiency of reaſon to be natural to all men, as cannot be ſupported by a ſingle inſtance of any one man, that ever lived, and is fully contradicted by the experience and hiſtory of every age ſince the creation of the world.

By what has been ſaid, I hope the reader will obſerve, that this enquiry about the perfection or imperfection, the ſtrength or weakneſs, of reaſon in man, as to matters of religion, reſts *wholly* upon fact and experience; and that therefore all ſpeculative reaſonings upon it, are as idle, and viſionary, as a ſick man's dreams about health; and are as wholly to be rejected, as any ſpeculative arguments that ſhould pretend to prove, in ſpite of all facts and experience,

perience, the *immortality*, and *unalterable* ſtate of human bodies.

Our author himſelf ſeems ſenſible, that the argument drawn from facts and experience, preſſed hard upon his cauſe; and therefore has given the beſt anſwer to it, he can yet think of.

" It cannot, *ſays he*, be imputed to any defect in the light of nature, that the *Pagan* world ran into idolatry; but to their being entirely governed by prieſts, who pretended communication with their gods, and to have thence their revelations, which they impoſed on the credulous, as divine oracles."

The juſtneſs of this aſſertion, will fully appear by the following illuſtration.

" It cannot be imputed to any defect in the health, " and ſoundneſs of man's natural conſtitution, that the " world has, in all ages, been over-run with diſtem- " pers; but to their being entirely governed by phy- " ſicians, who pretended to I know not what ſecret " knowledge of medicines, which they impoſed on " the ſickly, as infallible remedies."

For, as a perfect ſtate of health, conſcious to itſelf of a ſufficiency of natural ſtrength to keep clear of all diſeaſes, ſeems to be out of all danger from phyſicians; ſo had mankind been ever conſcious to themſelves, of a ſufficient natural knowledge of what is true or falſe in religion; ſuch *as enabled men of the meaneſt capacity to diſtinguiſh between religion and ſuperſtition*, * what *room* had there been for frauds and impoſtures herein?

" Can the ſuperſtition of the *Pagans* be imputed to any defect, or inſufficiency in the light of reaſon, when it was wholly owing to their abandoning that divine light; and in defiance of it, running into ſenſeleſs traditions?" †

But how came it, that they ran into ſenſeleſs traditions? What was it that admitted theſe traditions, as juſt and good? Why, it was that faculty which judges of every thing, and which this writer recommends

* *Page* 3. † *Page* 37.

mends as an unerring guide. And to ſay, a man's ſuperſtition is not owing to any defect or weakneſs of his reaſon, but to his admitting ſenſeleſs traditions, is as vain, as to ſay, a man's falſe reaſoning is not owing to any weakneſs of his reaſon, but to his proceeding upon fooliſh and abſurd arguments.

He proceeds thus: "It is certain no good argument againſt the ſufficiency of the divine light of nature, that men could not err, except they left it, and followed vain traditions." *

This obſervation has juſt the ſame ſenſe and acuteneſs in it, as if it had been ſaid, *It is certainly no good argument againſt* the ſufficiency of the divine healthfulneſs *of human nature, that men could not be ſickly, except they left it*, and *fell into various diſtempers: Or, againſt the* ſufficiency of the divine ſtrength of natural courage, that men could not be timerous, till they left it, and followed vain fears. For, to prove that reaſon is ſufficient, becauſe every thing that is abſurd, is contrary to reaſon, is like proving our healthfulneſs to be ſufficient, becauſe all diſtempers are contrary to it: or our courage to be ſufficient, becauſe fears and cowardice are contrary to it.

Beſides, how is it that men leave their reaſon? Why, juſt as ignorant men leave their knowledge; as dull people leave their wit, or cowards leave their courage. The firſt part of this paragraph tells you of a ſufficiency of the divine light of nature: Well; what has this divine light of nature done? What ſufficient effects has it had? Why, it has covered all the world with darkneſs.

Again; Suppoſing that all mankind, even the wiſeſt nations, have for this ſix thouſand years been thus impoſed upon, not knowing how to diſtinguiſh idle tales and ſenſeleſs traditions from true religion; is not this a noble foundation for this writer to build the *ſufficiency of the divine light of nature upon?* For ſuppoſing it had been in the greateſt degree inſufficient, what other effect could have followed from it, but only this, that *all mankind*, even the *wiſeſt nations*, ſhould have been over-run with error? And is it not

* Second Addreſs, page 39.

ſtrange, that effects ſhould bear no proportion to their cauſes; that the ſame things ſhould follow from the the *ſufficiency* of the divine light of nature, which muſt have followed from its *greateſt inſufficiency?*

And muſt not the enemies of *reaſon* and *free thinking*, be forced to confeſs, that this writer hath choſen an excellent guide for himſelf; ſince he ſo fully acknowledges, that no one yet has been rightly guided by it? Muſt not his preſent undertaking be granted to be the effect of cool and ſober deliberation, ſince it only calls people of *all*, even the *meaneſt capacities*, to ſuch an uſe of their reaſon, as the wiſeſt of men and nations have always been ſtrangers to?

CHAP. V.

Shewing that all the mutability *of our tempers, the* diſorders *of our paſſions, the* corruption *of our hearts, all the* reveries *of the imagination, all the* contradictions *and* abſurdities *that are to be found in human life, and human opinions, are in effect the mutability, diſorders, corruption, and abſurdities of* human reaſon.

IT is the intent of this chapter to ſhew, that although common language aſcribes a variety of faculties and principles to the ſoul, imputing this action to the blindneſs of our *paſſions*, that to the inconſtancy of our *tempers;* one thing to the heat of our *imagination*, another to the coolneſs of our *reaſon*; yet, in ſtrictneſs of truth, every thing that is done by us, is the action and operation of our reaſon, and is to be aſcribed to it, as the ſole principle from whence it proceeded, and by which it is governed and effected.

And

And the different degrees of reaſon are in men, as the different degrees of love and averſion; as the different degrees of wit, parts, good nature, or ill nature, are in man.

And as all men have naturally more or leſs of theſe qualities, ſo all men have naturally more or leſs reaſon: and the bulk of mankind are as different in reaſon, as they are in theſe qualities.

As love is the ſame paſſion in all men, yet is infinitely different; as hatred is the ſame paſſion in all men, yet with infinite differences; ſo reaſon is the ſame faculty in all men, yet with infinite differences.

And as our paſſions not only make us different from other men, but frequently and almoſt daily different from ourſelves, loving and hating under great inconſtancy; ſo our reaſon is not only different from the reaſon of other men, but is often different from itſelf; by a ſtrange inconſtancy, ſetting up firſt one opinion, and then another.

So that when we talk of *human reaſon*, or a reaſon *common* to mankind, we talk of as *various*, *uncertain*, and *unmeaſurable* a thing, as when we talk of a *love*, an *averſion*, a *good nature*, or *ill nature*, common to mankind; for theſe qualities admit of no variation, uncertainty, or mutability, but ſuch as they directly receive from the *reaſon* of mankind.

For it is as much the reaſon of man that acts in all theſe tempers, and makes them to be juſt what they are, as it is the reaſon of man that demonſtrates a mathematical propoſition.

Was our reaſon ſteady, there would be juſt the ſame ſteadineſs and regularity in our tempers; did not reaſon fall into follies and abſurdities, we ſhould have nothing fooliſh or abſurd in our love or averſion. For every humour, every kind of love or averſion, is as ſtrictly the *action* or *operation* of our reaſon, as judgment is the act of our reaſon.

And the tempers and paſſions of a child, differ only from the tempers and paſſions of a man, as the reaſon of a child differs from the reaſon of man.

So

So that our paſſions and tempers, are the natural real effects of our reaſon, and have no qualities, either good or bad, but ſuch as are to be imputed to it.

A laudable good nature, or a laudable averſion, is only reaſon acting in a *certain manner*: a criminal good nature, or a criminal averſion, is nothing elſe but reaſon acting in another certain manner.

But ſtill it is reaſon, or our underſtanding that is the *only agent* in our bad paſſions, as well as good paſſions; and as much the *ſole agent* in all our paſſions and tempers, as in things of mere ſpeculation.

So that the ſtate of reaſon in human life, is nothing elſe but the ſtate of human tempers and paſſions; and right reaſon in morality, is nothing elſe but right love, and right averſion.

All *that* therefore which we commonly call the weakneſs, blindneſs, and diſorder of our *paſſions*, is in reality the weakneſs, blindneſs, and diſorder of our *reaſon*. For a right love, or wrong love, denotes only reaſon acting in a *certain*, *particular* manner.

So that if any thing can be ſaid of love, averſion, good nature, or ill nature, as common to mankind; the ſame may be ſaid of reaſon, as common to mankind.

For the diſtinction of our reaſon from our paſſions, is only a diſtinction in language, made at pleaſure; and is no more real than the *deſire* and *inclination* are really different from the *will*. All therefore that is weak and fooliſh in our paſſions, is the weakneſs and folly of our reaſon; all the inconſtancy and caprice of our humours and tempers, is the caprice and inconſtancy of our reaſon.

It is not properly *avarice* that makes men ſordid; it is not *ambition* that makes them reſtleſs; it is not *bribery* that makes men ſell their conſciences; it is not *intereſt* that makes them lye, and cheat, and perjure themſelves. What is it therefore? Why it is that *abſolutely perfect* faculty, which our author ſets up as the *unerring* ſtandard of all that is *wiſe*, *holy*, and *good*; it is *reaſon*, the *uſe of reaſon*, *human reaſon*, that does all this.

For

For whether any thing be fit to be done, it is, as he ſays, "reaſon alone which muſt judge; as the eye is the ſole judge of what is viſible, the ear of what is audible, ſo reaſon of what is reaſonable."

Every thing therefore that is done, every thing that is choſen in human life before any thing elſe, is as ſtrictly choſen by reaſon, as every thing that is ſeen, is ſeen by the eye; and every thing that is heard, is heard by the ear.

To ſuppoſe that reaſon permits itſelf to be governed by paſſions or tempers, but is not the *immediate agent* of all that is done by them, is as abſurd, as to ſuppoſe that reaſon permits itſelf to be governed by the *hand* when it is writing falſly, or the *tongue* when it is talking profanely, but it is not the immediate, direct agent of all that is written and ſpoken by them.

Brutes are incapable of immorality, becauſe none of their actions are the actions of *reaſon:* every thing therefore that is immorality, baſeneſs, or villany in us, muſt be the act of our reaſon; otherwiſe it could no more be immoral, than the actions of brutes.

If therefore, as this author often ſaith, reaſon be the only faculty that diſtinguiſheth us from brutes; it neceſſarily follows, that thoſe irregularities, whether of humour, paſſions, or tempers, which cannot be imputed to brutes, muſt be ſolely attributed to that faculty by which we are diſtinguiſhed from brutes; and conſequently, every thing that is fooliſh, vain, ſhameful, falſe, treacherous, and baſe, muſt be the acts of our reaſon; ſince if they were the acts of any thing elſe, they could have no more vanity, falſeneſs, or baſeneſs, than hunger and thirſt.

It is not my intent to condemn our common language, which talks of reaſon and the paſſions, as if they were as different as a *governor* and his *ſubjects*.

Theſe forms of ſpeech are very intelligible and uſeful, and give great life and ornament to all diſcourſes upon morality.

But when perſons aſcribe to reaſon, as a *diſtinct faculty* of human nature, I know not what *abſolute perfection*, making it as immutable, and incapable of any

addition or improvement, as God himſelf; it is neceſſary to conſider reaſon, not as it is repreſented in common language, but as it is in reality in itſelf.

Notwithſtanding therefore in common language, our paſſions and the effects of them, are uſefully diſtinguiſhed from our reaſon, I have here ventured to ſhew, that all the diſorders of human nature, are in effect the diſorders of human reaſon, and that all the perfection or imperfection of our paſſions, is the perfection or imperfection of our reaſon.

Our follies and abſurdities of every kind are as neceſſarily to be aſcribed to our reaſon, as the *firſt immediate* cauſe of them, as our wiſdom and diſcretion are to be aſcribed to it in that degree.

The difference between reaſon aſſenting to the properties of a *ſquare*, and reaſon acting in motions of deſire or averſion, is only this, that in the latter caſe, it is reaſon acting under a ſenſe of its own good or evil, in the former caſe, it is reaſon acting under a ſenſe of *magnitude*.

And as the relations of magnitude, as they are the objects of our reaſon, are only the objects of its aſſent or diſſent; ſo good and evil, as they are objects of our reaſon, are only the objects of its *deſire* or *averſion*: and as the aſſent or diſſent, in matters of ſpeculation, whether right or wrong, is ſolely the act of our reaſon; ſo deſire or averſion, in human life, whether right or wrong, is equally the act of our reaſon.

We often ſay, that our paſſions deceive us, or perſuade us; but this is no more ſtrictly ſo, than when we ſay, our *intereſt* deceived, or a *bribe* blinded us. For bribes and intereſt are not active principles, nor have any power of deception; it is only our reaſon that gives them a falſe value, and prefers them to a greater good.

It is juſt ſo in what we call the deceit of our paſſions: they meddle with us no more than bribes meddle with us; but that pleaſurable perception, which is to be found in certain enjoyments, is by our reaſon preferred to that better good, which we might expect from ſelf-denial.

We

We ſay again, that our paſſions paint things in falſe colours, and preſent to our minds vain appearances of happineſs.

But this is no more ſtrictly true, than when we ſay, our *imagination* forms caſtles in the air. For the imagination ſignifies no diſtinct faculty from our reaſon, but only reaſon acting upon our *own ideas*.

So when our paſſions are ſaid to give falſe colours to things, or preſent vain appearances of happineſs, it is only our reaſon acting upon its own ideas of *good* and *evil*, juſt as it acts upon its own ideas of *architecture*, in forming caſtles in the air.

So that all *that* which we call different faculties, tempers, and paſſions, ſtrictly ſpeaking, means nothing elſe, but the various acts of one and the ſame rational principle, which has different names, according to the objects that it acts upon, and the manner of its acting.

In ſome things it is called ſpeculative, in others it is called practical reaſon. And we may as juſtly think our ſpeculative reaſon is a different faculty from our practical reaſon, as that our averſions, or likings, are not as fully to be aſcribed to our reaſon, as ſyllogiſms and demonſtrations.

It was truly reaſon that made *Medea* kill her children, that made *Cato* kill himſelf, that made Pagans offer human ſacrifices to idols; that made *Epicurus* deny a providence, *Mahomet* pretend a revelation; that made ſome men ſceptics, others bigots; ſome enthuſiaſts, others profane; that made *Hobbes* aſſert all religion to be human invention, and *Spinoſa* to declare trees, and ſtones, and animals to be parts of God; that makes free-thinkers deny freedom of will, and fataliſts exhort to a reformation of manners; that made *Vaux* a conſpirator, and *Ludlow* a regicide; that made *Muggleton* a fanatic; and *Rocheſter* a libertine. It was truly reaſon that did all theſe things, as it is reaſon that demonſtrates mathematical propoſitions.

Medea and *Cato* acted as truly according to the judgment of their reason at that time, as the confessor that chuses rather to suffer, than deny his faith.

Had not *Medea* and *Cato* thought it best to do what they did, at the time they did it, they would no more have done it than the *confessor* would chuse to suffer rather than deny his faith, unless he had judged best so to do.

And when we say, reason governs the passions, it means no more, than that reason governs itself; that it acts with deliberation and attention, does not yield to its first judgments, but uses second, and third thoughts.

So that guarding against the passions, is only guarding against its own first judgments and opinions; that guarding against itself.

To all this may, perhaps, be objected, that our passions arise from bodily motions, and depend upon the state of our blood and animal spirits, and therefore what we do under their commotions, cannot be attributed to our reason.

It is readily granted, that the body has this share in our passions and tempers: but then the same thing must be granted of the body, in all the acts and operations of the mind. So that if our desires and aversions cannot be imputed to our reason, because of the joint operation of the animal spirits in them; no more can syllogisms and demonstrations be attributed to our reason, because the operation of bodily spirits concurreth in the forming of them.

For the most abstract thought, and speculation of the mind, has truly the *conjunct* operation of bodily spirits, as our strongest desires or aversions. And it is as much owing to the state of the body, that such speculations are what they are, as it is owing to the state of the body, that such passions are what they are.

For the motions of the bodily spirits are inseparable from, and according to, the state and action of the mind: when reason is in speculation of a trifle, they

they concur but weakly; when reaſon ſpeculates intenſely, their operation is increaſed. And ſometimes the attention of the mind is ſo great, and has ſo engaged and called in all the animal ſpirits to its aſſiſtance, that the operations of our ſenſes are ſuſpended, and we neither ſee, nor feel, till the attention of the mind has let the ſpirits return to all the parts of the body.

Now will any one ſay, that theſe intenſe thoughts are leſs the acts of the mind, becauſe they have a greater concurrence of bodily ſpirits, than when it is acting with indifference, and ſo has a leſſer quantity of bodily ſpirits?

Yet this might as well be ſaid, as to ſay, that the aſſent or diſſent, in ſpeculation, is the act of our reaſon; but liking or diſliking, loving or hating, are not the acts of our reaſon, becauſe they have a greater concurrence of bodily ſpirits.

For, as the mind is in a different ſtate when it deſires good, or fears evil, from what it is when it only compares two triangles; ſo the motions of the bodily ſpirits, have only *ſuch* a difference, as is *correſpondent* to theſe two ſtates of the mind. They act and join as much in comparing the triangles, as in the deſire of good, or fear of evil. And the mind is juſt as much governed by the body, in its paſſions, as in its calmeſt contemplations.

For as the gentle operation of the animal ſpirits is then correſpondent to the ſtate and action of the mind; ſo in all our paſſions, the ſtrong and increaſed motion of the animal ſpirits, is equally correſpondent thereto.

So that reaſon is no more the agent, in our tempers and paſſions, than in our dry and ſedate ſpeculations.

It may happen, that a man may have as great an eagerneſs in ſolving a mathematical problem, as another hath to obtain any great good, or avoid any great evil.

But may it therefore be ſaid, that it is not reaſon that ſolves the problem, becauſe the bodily ſpirits are ſo active in it?

To draw now ſome plain conſequences from the foregoing account.

Firſt, If reaſon be the *univerſal agent* in the natural man; if all the difference among *ſuch* men, is only ſuch a difference as reaſon makes, then nothing can be more extravagant, than to affirm any thing concerning the degree of perfection, or imperfection of reaſon, as *common* to man. It is as wild and romantic, as to pretend to ſtate the meaſure of folly and wiſdom, of fear and courage, of pride and humility, of good humour and ill humour, *common* to mankind: for as theſe ſtates of the mind, are only ſo many different ſtates of reaſon; ſo no uncertainty belongs to them, but what, in the *ſame degree*, belongs to *reaſon*.

Secondly, Granting that all matters of religion muſt be agreeable to *right, unprejudiced* reaſon; yet this could be no ground for receiving nothing in religion, but what *human* reaſon could prove to be neceſſary; for *human* reaſon is no more *right*, *unprejudiced* reaſon, than a ſinner is *ſinleſs*, or a man an *angel*.

Granting again, that a man may go a great way towards rectifying his reaſon, and laying aſide its prejudices; yet no particular man can be a *better judge* of the rectitude of his *own reaſon*, than he is of the rectitude of his own *ſelf-love*, the brightneſs of his own *parts*, and the depth of his own *judgment*.

For there is nothing to deceive him in *ſelf-love*, in the opinion of his *own merit*, *wit*, and *judgment*, but what has the ſame power to deceive him, in the opinion of his own reaſon. And if, as our author ſays, "It be the fate of moſt ſects to be fondeſt of their uglieſt brats.*" None ſeem ſo inevitably expoſed to this fatality, as thoſe whoſe religion is to have no form, but ſuch as it receives from their own hearts.

Thirdly, A man that has his religion to chuſe, and with this previous privilege, that he need not allow any

* *Page* 184.

any thing to be matter of religion, but what his own reaſon can prove to be ſo, is in a fair way to be governed by his *paſſions*, as he that has his *condition* of life to chuſe, with the liberty of taking that which his own reaſon directs him to.

Does any one ſuppoſe, that nothing but *reaſon* would direct him in the choice of his condition? Or that he would make the better choice, becauſe he proceeded upon this maxim, that nothing could be right, but that which was agreeable to his *own reaſon?* Or that his tempers, his prejudices, his ſelf-love, his paſſions, his partiality, would have no influence upon his choice, becauſe he had reſigned himſelf up to his *own reaſon?*

Now it is juſt the ſame in the choice of a religion, as in the choice of a condition of life: as it is not a matter of ſpeculation, but of *good* and *evil*; ſo if it is left to be determined by our *own reaſon*, it rather appeals to our *tempers*, than employs our reaſon; and to reſign ourſelves up to our own reaſon, to tell us what ought, or ought not to be a matter of religion, is only reſigning ourſelves up to our tempers, to take what we *like*, and refuſe what we *diſlike* in religion.

In a word; When *ſelf-love* is a proper arbitrator betwixt a man and his adverſary; when *revenge* is a juſt judge of meekneſs; when *pride* is a true lover of humility; when *falſhood* is a teacher of truth; when luſt is a faſt friend of chaſtity; when the *fleſh* leads to the ſpirit; when *ſenſuality* delights in ſelf-denial; when *partiality* is a promoter of equity; when the *palate* can taſte the difference between ſin and holineſs: when the *hand* can feel the truth of a propoſition; then may *human reaſon* be a proper arbitrator between God and man, the ſole, final, juſt judge of all that ought, or ought not to be matter of a *holy*, *divine*, and *heavenly* religion.

Laſtly, If this be the ſtate of reaſon, then to pretend, that our reaſon is too perfect to be governed by any thing but its own light, is the ſame extravagance, as to pretend, that our love is too pure to be

govern-

governed by any thing but its own inclinations, our hatred too juſt to be governed by any thing but its own motions. For if all that is baſe and criminal in love, all that is unjuſt and wicked in hatred, is to be imputed to our reaſon; then no perfection can be aſcribed to our reaſon, but ſuch as is to be aſcribed to our love and hatred.

AN

AN

EXTRACT

FROM

Mr. *LAW*'s

SERIOUS

ANSWER

TO

Dr. TRAPP's Four Sermons

ON

The Sin, Folly, and Danger of being Righteous over much.

A SERIOUS

ANSWER

TO

Doctor TRAPP's Four Sermons, &c.

1. MIGHT I follow the *bent* of my own mind, I ſhould be wholly employed in ſetting forth the infinite love of God to mankind in Chriſt Jeſus, and endeavouring to draw all men to the belief and acknowledgment of it. This *one great mercy* of God, which makes the *one* happineſs of all mankind, ſo juſtly deſerves all our thoughts and meditations, ſo highly enlightens, and improves every mind that is attentive to it, ſo removes all the evils of this preſent world, ſo ſweetens every ſtate of life, ſo inflames the heart with the love of every divine and human virtue, that he is no ſmall looſer, whoſe mind is, either by writing or reading, detained from the view and contemplation of it.

2. When the myſtery of divine love was firſt manifeſted to the world, it produc'd its proper effects. It put an end to all *ſelfiſhneſs* and *diviſion*; *for all that believed were of one heart and one ſpirit, and had all things common.* * And indeed, under the real influence and full belief of this great myſtery of divine love, there

* *Acts* 2. *Verſe* 44.

ſeems to be no room left for any thing elſe amongſt chriſtians, but returns of love to God, and flowing out of love towards one another.

3. It is ſo difficult to enter into controverſy without being, or at leaſt ſeeming in ſome degree unkind to the perſon one oppoſes, that it is with great reluctance I have enter'd upon my preſent undertaking; having nothing more deeply riveted in my heart, than an univerſal love and kindneſs for all men, and more eſpecially for thoſe whom God has called to be my fellow-labourers, in promoting the ſalvation of mankind. But however unwilling, yet I find myſelf obliged to conſider and lay open many grievous faults in the Doctor's diſcourſe; and to ſhew to all Chriſtians, that the deareſt intereſts of their ſouls are much endangered by it.

4. And this I muſt do with great plainneſs and ſincerity, in the love of truth, and under the direction of charity, ſaying nothing in the ſpirit of an *adverſary*, ſparing nothing through *reſpect of perſons*, ſacrificing nothing to the taſte or temper of the world, but ſetting every thing in that naked light, in which the ſpirit of God repreſents it to my own mind.

5. The Doctor undertakes to ſtir up, and alarm mankind with the *ſin*, *folly* and *danger* of being *righteous over much*. The text from which he has the title of his diſcourſes is very unhappily choſen, and muſt be looked upon rather as a ſevere reproach, than any kind of juſtification of it. The text is indeed in the writings of *Solomon*, and as it ſtands there, has no hurt in it; becauſe as the royal preacher ſometimes introduces fools, and ſometimes infidels making their ſpeeches, ſo there is a neceſſity of ſuppoſing that to be the caſe in the Doctor's text; not only from the context which plainly ſhews there are two perſons introduced, the one *for*, the other *againſt* righteouſneſs; but becauſe the words, otherwiſe, cannot be taken in a ſenſe that is tolerable, or conſiſtent with the common *notions* of piety.

5 Is it not therefore ſtrange, that the Doctor ſhould think it right, to limit, explain, and model both the letter and ſpirit of the goſpel by ſuch a ſaying in the writings

writings of *Solomon* as muſt be aſcribed to the ſpirit and mouth of an infidel? Is it not ſtranger, that ſuch a text, ſo offenſive to piety, ſhould have not only been ſo long dwelt upon in the Doctor's three churches, but ſent abroad into the world, as a proper key to all the practical ſayings, parables, and doctrines of Jeſus Chriſt?

7. Supported by this text, the Doctor endeavours to deter and fright Chriſtians from the ſin, folly and danger of being righteous over much, and from what he calls the baneful plague of enthuſiaſm. But then it is matter of juſt complaint, that he does all this, without ever ſhewing in any part of his diſcourſe, wherein true righteouſneſs, or the right and ſober ſpirit of piety conſiſts. And if he ſuppoſed all his readers to be already well acquainted with the nature, and extent of Chriſtian holineſs, there would then have been little occaſion for his preſent undertaking.

8. But the Doctor overlooks this important matter. He neither ſuppoſes them to have this knowledge, nor endeavours to help them to it; but in a flow of zeal, reflects at large upon all attempts towards a piety, that is not *modern*, *common*, and according to the preſent faſhion of religion in the world. Thus, you every where find ſevere reflections caſt upon pretenders to piety, pretended ſpiritualiſts; great accuſations of exceſſes, extraordinaries and by-paths; but no where a word or a hint, in favour of thoſe, who would only be ſo extraordinary, and ſo much out of the *common* paths, as the bleſſed ſaints, and martyrs of the primitive church were. No where are *ſuch people* told, that he wiſhes them *God ſpeed*, that *their zeal* is much wanted both amongſt *clergy* and *laity*, and that the goſpel ſuffers becauſe we know not where to find living examples of its purity and perfection. No where are they told, that he writes not againſt them, that he loves their ſpirit, and ſhould be glad to add new favours to it: nor what Chriſtian perfection is, what a holineſs of body, ſoul and ſpirit it requires; how powerfully all are called to it, how earneſtly all ought to aſpire af-

ter it, and how ſadly miſtaken, what enemies to themſelves they are, who for the ſake of any, or all the things in the world, die leſs purified and perfect, than they might have been.

9. If we had to do with *one ſingle* perſon ſincerely good, yet ſeeming to carry matters too high in ſome part of his duty, and intended privately to diſſuade him from ſuch heights; yet even this, thus privately done and to a perſon of piety, would be exceeding *dangerous*, and *unjuſtifiable*; unleſs we took the utmoſt care at the ſame time, to *keep up* the pious zeal of his mind, to ſhew him, wherein true perfection conſiſted, and to encourage his utmoſt endeavours after it.

But if this caution, inſtruction and encouragement, cannot be omitted without great hurt to religion, when we ſpeak only to a perſon of piety, and in private, about any religious *extremes*, what muſt be ſaid of the Doctor's conduct? Who to the world dead in treſpaſſes and ſin, preaches up the *ſin*, *folly* and *danger* of *being* righteous over much? To the world *eating and drinking and riſing up to play*, he harangues upon the madneſs, danger and folly of too much temperance, abſtinence, mortification and ſeverity of life! To the world aſleep, inſenſible, and careleſs, not only of the purity and perfection, but of the firſt principles of the goſpel, he boldly and raſhly reproaches all appearances of holineſs, that are uncommon and extraordinary! To *no* part of the world does he repreſent or propoſe the *perfection* of the goſpel, or recommend it as that, which deſerves all that they can do, or ſuffer for the ſake of it.

This, therefore, I am obliged to point out, as a *fundamental defect* in the Doctor's diſcourſe, and ſuch as renders it an evil *temptation*, a dangerous *ſnare*, and fatal *deluſion* to all thoſe who do not read it with a full, and thorough diſlike.

10. Coldneſs, indifference, and a lifeleſs, outward compliance with the duties of religion: A ſlavery to eaſe, ſoftneſs, and ſenſual pleaſures: A criminal conformity to the ſpirit, faſhions, and corruptions

corruptions of the world; unmortified paſſions; conniving at favourite ſin; deep roots of pride, partiality, and ſelf-love: an unwakened conſcience; an inſenſibility of their corrupt, unreformed, unregenerate ſtate: a proneneſs to be content and ſatisfied with poor beginnings, names and appearances of virtue; is perhaps the ſtate of more than two *thirds* of thoſe that are looked upon to be the religious amongſt us.

Now the doctor's diſcourſe has a direct and natural fitneſs to lull all theſe people aſleep, to ſuppreſs all ſtirring and intentions of amendment, to keep up and nouriſh every diſorder of their hearts, to increaſe their blindneſs, and awaken nothing in them, but a *hurtful zeal* to cenſure and condemn all thoſe that are endeavouring to practiſe the *uncommon* piety of the goſpel.

There is ſcarce a reader amongſt this number of people, whether he be *layman* or *clergyman*, but will find this effect from the doctor's inſtructions; he will begin to take *freſh comfort* in his ſtate, to think himſelf *happy* for having had no aſpirings after high improvements in piety; he will not only be content with his corruptions, but be fixed and hardened againſt all *inward* and *outward* calls to a ſolid piety; he will approve of the deadneſs and inſenſibility of his own heart, and acquieſce in it, as his juſt ſecurity, from the *ſin* and *folly* and *danger* of being *righteous over much*.

11. Again, others there are, I make no doubt in all parts of the kingdom, both amongſt clergy and laity, men and women, rich and poor, whoſe conſciences are greatly awakened, who ſee the general apoſtacy from the religion of the goſpel, whoſe ſouls are wanting, and wiſhing nothing ſo much, as to know how all that they *are*, all that they *have*, and all that they *do*, may be one continual ſacrifice, and ſervice of love unto God; to know how, and in what manner, and to what extent, and by what means, they may and ought to *be perfect, even as their father which is in heaven is perfect*.

Now, who can help looking with *love* and *compaſſion* upon thoſe poor ſouls, longing for that which has been ſo long loſt; aſking after that, which ſcarce any one will tell them any thing of, and wanting to enter upon paths where there are few or no footſteps to be ſeen, nor any travellers in motion?

Had theſe awakened ſouls lived in the firſt ages of the church, nay, I may ſay in almoſt any till theſe very laſt ages of it, their zeal had not been in vain: they could have been at no loſs to know *how* they were to proceed in their heavenly purpoſe; becauſe they would have been immediately directed to ſome living examples of the perfect ſpirit of the goſpel, who were publickly known and acknowledged by all to be ſuch, and who had the ſame undiſputed right, to point out the chriſtian profeſſion, as *John* the Baptiſt had to preach up *mortification* and *ſelf-denial*. Every age, and every ſex, prieſts and people of all conditions, had their known ſtandards to reſort to, where every one was ſure to be guided, aſſiſted and encouraged, to live up to that height of holineſs.

12. But now how does the doctor deal with this ſort of people? What *love*, *aſſiſtance*, and *encouragement* does he reach out to them? Why, truly, he conſiders them as a *deluded*, *weak*, or *hypocritical*, or *half-thinking* people, that diſturb the chriſtian church with their projects; who are to be ſet right by returning to the inſtructions of common ſenſe. He ridicules every ſtep they muſt take in their intended progreſs, by adding abſurdities of his own invention to it. There is nothing for ſuch people throughout his whole diſcourſe, but reproaches, and diſcouragement.

Are they deſirous of all that *ſelf-denial*, all ſuch *mortification* of bodily appetites and ſenſual paſſions, as may beſt fit them to be temples of the holy ſpirit? He ridicules them, as holding the ſinfulneſs of *ſmelling a roſe*.

Do they begin to diſcover the *deep corruption* of their nature, the ſuperficialneſs and weakneſs of their virtues,

tues, and to fear they have as yet ſcarce come up to the righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees?* He tells them, "The great enemy of ſouls adapts his temptations to all ſorts of tempers and diſpoſitions. Thoſe who are diſpoſed to be good and virtuous, if he cannot prevail with them to be vicious, commonly ſo called, he labours to make them over virtuous, that is vicious, tho' not commonly ſo called; and ſo involves them in dangers and miſchiefs."

Are they ſuch as are deſirous of reforming their own lives, by bringing all their actions to the ſtandard of the goſpel, and wholly intent upon their own advancement in merely *practical piety?*

To theſe he ſhews, that they are in the very paths that lead, and always did lead to *fanatick madneſs.*

Thus ſays he, "To what a height of *fanatick madneſs* in *doctrines*, as well as practice are ſome advanced, who ſet out at firſt with the appearance of more than ordinary ſanctity in *practice only*?" And again, "I do ſay that in all ages enthuſiaſts have been *righteous over much*; they began with the laſt mentioned, and ended with the other: *and is it not ſo now?*"

13. Further, are there others, who begin to feel the *myſtery* of their redemption diſcover'd in their own ſouls, ſo that they hunger and thirſt after the manifeſtation of the divine life in them, deſiring that Chriſt, may be wholly form'd and revealed in them, that they may *put on* Chriſt, *be* in him *new creatures*, led by his ſpirit, *growing* in him as branches in the vine, hearing the word of God written and ſpoken in their hearts, in his light *ſeeing* light, and *taſting* in the inward man *the powers of the world to come?*

For ſuch as theſe, the doctor has this inſtruction: "That there is, ſays he, ſuch a thing as the operation of the Holy ſpirit upon our ſouls, tho' we cannot diſtinguiſh it from the operations of our own minds, is not only granted, but inſiſted upon by all ſincere and ſober chriſtians. But what *reaſon*, what *ſcripture*, is there for this inward *ſeeing, hearing, feeling?*

According therefore to the doctor's divinity both reaſon and ſcripture require, that the true chriſtian

be *inwardly blind*, inwardly *deaf*, and void of all inward *feeling*. For if neither ſcripture nor reaſon will allow of any inward ſenſes, then they muſt both of them require an *inward inſenſibility*. But as ſcripture from *Geneſis* to the *Revelation*, is full of proofs of theſe inward ſenſes, I ſhall not now produce them; I ſhall here only obſerve that *hardneſs of heart* is a well known phraſe of ſcripture, and every where *ſignifies* ſome degree of *blindneſs*, *deafneſs*, and loſs of *feeling*. I ſuppoſe it will not be ſaid that it ſignifies blindneſs, or loſs of *outward eyes* and *ears*, or feeling: neither does it ſignify a want of *human reaſon*, or natural *ſagacity*; for *learned*, *polite*, and *ingenious* men are full as ſubject, as others to this hardneſs of heart. Therefore the ſcripture is as open, as plain and expreſs in declaring *for inward ſenſes*, as it is in declaring againſt ſuch a thing, as *hardneſs* of *heart*. Hardneſs of heart is that to the *inward* ſenſes, which a deep, or as we call it, *dead ſleep*, is to the *outward*. It keeps our inward eyes, and ears, and feeling all lock'd up.

14. A broken and a contrite heart unlocks our inward ſenſes, and makes us ſee, and hear and feel the things, which could no more be ſeen, heard or felt before, than a man in a deep ſleep can hear, and ſee, and feel the things, that are ſaid and done about him.

Water frozen into a rock of ice, is very different from the ſame water melted, warm'd, and moving under the influences of the ſun and the air.

Now this difference between water *flowing*, full of *light* and *air* and the ſame water frozen into a dark, hard rock of ice, is but a ſmall reſemblance of the difference between a *hardened* heart, and the *ſame heart* become broken.

15. But I return to the doctor. His further inſtruction to this ſort of people ſtands thus. They are told by him, "that their high notions of ſpiritual improvements have this effect: on the one hand, they lead to *preſumption*, on the other to *deſperation*." "He has been told, *he ſays*, that ſome have been actually thrown into deſpair. They have been made ſtark

ſtark mad and received into *Bedlam* as ſuch. *And then he cries out.* Was the religion of Jeſus Chriſt intended to make people mad? Is this for the honour of chriſtianity?"

I ſhall not here queſtion the doctor's information. I ſhall only obſerve, that when our Saviour was upon earth, there were two ſorts of *mad* people about him, The *one ſort* ran about in diſorder, tore their cloaths and cut their own fleſh; the other ſort rav'd in malice, threw duſt into the air, ſtopt their ears, and cry'd out *crucify him, crucify him.*

It may be aſk'd, which of theſe two ſorts of people were in the moſt diſorder'd and diſtemper'd ſtate? Whoſe madneſs was the moſt ſhocking, that of the lunaticks, or that of the *High Prieſts, Scribes*, and *Phariſees?* Thoſe who only mangled their own bodies, or thoſe that thirſted after the blood of Chriſt, and would have no reſt till they ſaw his body nail'd to the croſs? To me the *lunaticks*, ſeem to be in a *leſs degree* of diſorder; and the reaſon is this, becauſe I ſee that our Saviour could heal them, but not the Prieſts, Scribes and Phariſees.

Now is it reaſonable, on account of the *madneſs* of theſe Prieſts, Scribes and Doctors of the law, to ſay, "Is this for the honour of the *Jewiſh law?* Were the *law and the prophets intended to make people mad?*" If the doctor knows how to excuſe the law and the prophets, tho' theſe great ſtudents of them were in ſuch a deſperate ſtate of *madneſs*, then chriſtianity may be blameleſs; though here and there a chriſtian (ſo called) may be fit for *Bedlam.*

16. Again, are there others, who deſire to bring the whole form of their lives under rules of religion, to let the ſpirit of the goſpel give laws to the moſt ordinary, indifferent, innocent and lawful things and enjoyments; ſo that, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, *whether they eat or drink, or whatever they do*, they may *do all to the glory of God?*

Theſe people are told by the Doctor, that "Wholly abſtaining from things indifferent and innocent in themſelves, as forbidden and unlawful, is a ſignal inſtance

inſtance of being righteous over much; and ſo on the other hand, is making things indifferent to be neceſſary, and matters of duty."

What is here ſaid has ſome truth in it, and might be uſeful in its proper place, and under right limitations. But as it here ſtands, it is a grievous *ſnare* and *deceit* to the reader. For it is to ſignify to him, that *wholly abſtaining from* things in themſelves indifferent, cannot be made a *matter* of true religious advancement; but is a blameable inſtance of exceſs. If the doctor had meant only to teach, that we ſhould not abſtain from things indifferent, as if they were in *themſelves unlawful*, he ſhould have told his readers that he meant no more. He ſhould have told them, that, ſuch things might be abſtained from juſtly, upon a better principle, and ſo become very expedient and edifying; and that he did not condemn the abſtaining from ſuch things, when it was done upon a motive of piety, or for the better fulfilling any duty; but only when it was done from a ſuperſtitious notion, of the things being in themſelves ſin.

Had he done this, he had prevented the *ſnare* and *deceit* that is now in his aſſertion: but then he would at the ſame time have made it uſeleſs, and inſignificant to the deſign of his diſcourſe; and would have left a door open for ſuch advances in piety, as he is now oppoſing.

17. It might eaſily be ſhewn, if this was the place for it, that no one can truly fulfil the two firſt and greateſt of all laws, that of loving God with all our heart, and that of loving our neighbour as ourſelves, unleſs he be willing and glad, in many inſtances, *wholly* to *abſtain* from things in themſelves indifferent and innocent.

St. *Paul*'s doctrine is this: *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.* This ſets the matter right on both ſides. It leaves things in their own ſtate of indifference, and yet carries us to a higher rule of acting. It directs us wholly to abſtain from, ſome things innocent in themſelves, and to do things becauſe they are *expedient*; becauſe by ſo doing, we

ſhew

ſhew a higher love of God, and a greater deſire of doing every thing to his glory; becauſe we thereby attain a greater conqueſt over all our inward and outward enemies, and in a greater degree help forward the edification of our neighbour.

18. Let us look at St. *Paul*'s doctrine and examples in the two following remarkable inſtances.

Firſt where he declares it to be *lawful* for thoſe that preach the goſpel to live by the goſpel, and yet makes it matter of the greateſt *comfort* and joy to himſelf, that he wholly abſtained from this *lawful* thing: And declares, it were better for him to die, than that this *rejoicing* ſhould be taken from him. He appeals to his daily and nightly labouring with his own hands, that ſo he might preach the goſpel freely, and not be chargeable to thoſe that heard him. And this he ſaid he did, not for want of authority to do otherwiſe, but that he might make himſelf an enſample unto them who followed him.

What awakening inſtructions are here given to us of the clergy, in a matter of the greateſt moment! How ought every one to be frighted at the thought of deſiring or ſeeking a ſecond living, or of rejoicing at great pay where there is but little duty, when the Apoſtle's rejoicing conſiſted in this, that he had paſs'd thro' all the fatigues and perils of preaching the goſpel without any pay at all! How *cautious*, nay, how *fearful* ought we to be, of going ſo far as the *ſecular* laws permit us, when the Apoſtle thought it more deſirable to loſe his life, than to go ſo far as the general laws of the goſpel would have ſuffered him!

It is *looked upon* as *lawful*, to get ſeveral preferments, and to make a gain of the goſpel, by hiring others to do duty for us at a lower rate.—— It is looked upon as lawful, to quit a cure of ſouls of a ſmall income, for no other reaſon but becauſe we can get another of a greater.—— It is looked upon as lawful, for a clergyman to apply the revenue of a church, which he ſerves, to his own uſe, tho' he has more than a ſufficient competency of his *own*, and much more than the apoſtle could get by his labour.——

It

It is looked upon as lawful, for the clergy to live in ſtate and equipage, to buy purple and fine linen out of the revenue of the church.——It is looked upon as lawful, for clergymen to enrich their families, and bring up their children in the faſhionable vanities of a worldly and expenſive life, by money got by preaching the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

But now *ſuppoſing* all theſe to be *lawful*, what *comfort* and *joy* might we treaſure up for ourſelves, what benefit and edification ſhould we give to our neighbour, if we wholly abſtained from all theſe things, not by working day and night with our hands, as the great apoſtle did, but by limiting our wants and deſires according to the plain demands of nature, and a religious ſelf-denial?

The other inſtance of the apoſtle's I appeal to is that, where he ſays, It is good neither to eat "fleſh, nor drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother ſtumbleth and is offended. And again, If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no fleſh while the world ſtandeth, that I may not offend my brother." Hence it appears, that to abſtain from things indifferent, as if they were in themſelves ſinful, is wrong; but to *abſtain* from them upon other motives, may be matter of neceſſary duty and edification. But ſince the doctor has not looked at this matter in the twofold view in which only it can be juſtly apprehended, he can't well be excuſed from that *half thinking*, which he ſo much reproaches in others.

19. But I muſt further obſerve, that there is yet more of *ſnare* and *deception*, in what the doctor has here ſaid of this matter. For the reader may thereby be eaſily brought into a belief, that things in themſelves indifferent, are not *proper ſubjects* of religion, or means of advancing in piety; and that he need not bring himſelf under *any laws* of religion, concerning ſuch things.

Whereas nothing can be more contrary to truth, or more hurtful to piety than ſuch a belief. "Eating, drinking, ſleeping, dreſſing, reſting, labour, converſation,

verſation, trade, diverſion, and money, are in themſelves indifferent."

But it is in the religious, or irreligious uſe of theſe that ſome people *live* up to the ſpirit of the goſpel, and others *wholly die* to it. And it is from ſtrict laws of religion, made concerning theſe indifferent things, that the ſpiritual life of every one is to be built up.

And it is for want of religious laws in the uſe of theſe things, that the ſpirit of the goſpel cannot get poſſeſſion of our hearts. For our ſouls may receive an infinite hurt, and be rendered incapable of all true virtue, merely by the uſe of innocent and lawful things.

What is more innocent than reſt and retirement? And yet what more dangerous than ſloth and idleneſs? How lawful is the care of a family? And yet how are many people render'd incapable of all virtue, by a worldly, ſollicitous temper? How lawful is it for us, to eat and drink in ſuch quantity and quality, as may render the body healthful, and uſeful to the ſoul? And yet what danger is there in eating and drinking if we are not under this ſtrict law of religion, to ſeek *only* health; and not the pleaſure of various taſtes in our food? What *ſenſuality* of diſcourſe ſhall we not every day fall into, unleſs it be a fix'd law to us, to ſpeak of no other joy in our food, but that which is expreſſed by our grace before, and after our meals?

How indifferent a thing, and innocent in itſelf, is *dreſs*? And yet what more hurtful and abounding with ſin? It reaches and infects the heart and ſoul both of the wearer and beholder. Its evils are innumerable; it has deſtroyed, and does deſtroy like a peſtilence.

Now how can all theſe evils, which ariſe from the uſe of theſe things indifferent and lawful in themſelves be avoided, but by making every thing in our *common* and *ordinary* life to be matter of conſcience, which is to have its *rule* and *meaſure* and *end* from the ſpirit of religion? And indeed what other end is there

there in religion, but to govern every motion, and desire of our hearts? To make all the actions of our common life pure and holy, by being done in strict conformity to the will of God, and under the light and guidance of his holy spirit? So that the very outward *form* of our lives, and the *whole manner* of our living in the world, whether in estates, shops, or farms, whether in eating, drinking, or dressing, may make it known to all the world, that we do every thing in the name of Jesus Christ, suitably to that high vocation wherewith we are called.

20. No folly of life whatever can be rightly removed but by being thus wholly cut up by the roots, by making every thing subject to the spirit of religion.

That which is to direct our *prayers*, and govern us at church, must with the same strictness direct our conversation, and govern our dealings in common life. We must dress with the same spirit that we give *alms*, or go to *prayers*; that is, we must no more dress to be seen and admired by others, than we must give alms, or make prayers for the same reasons.

And when religion has its seat in our hearts, and is the work of God's spirit in us, this acting according to its direction in *all things*, will be so far from seeming to be a hard lesson, that it would be a pain to act otherwise. It is no hardship to a *miser* to do *every* thing suitable to the greedy desires of his heart. The ambitious man is not troubled with acting always agreeable to his ambition. If these persons are in trouble or distress, or under any dejection, you can only comfort the one with humour and power, and the other with filthy lucre and gain.

21. Yet the doctor complains of the *Treatise upon Christian Perfection*, because christians in *sickness, distress, and dejection* of *spirit* are there directed to seek for comfort and refreshment in God alone! Our blessed Lord is very short and yet very full upon this article. He only says, *Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world.* And the doctor might as well be

be angry at the goſpel for having made no mention of worldly amuſements proper for ſick and diſtreſſed chriſtians, as at the treatiſe of chriſtian perfection, for not having done the ſame.

If I ſhould ſee a ſick man ſmelling a roſe, I ſhould not reprove him. But if he wanted comfort in his ſtate, I would no more direct him to *any thing*, but the great and ſolid comforts that are to be found in the love, and goodneſs of God, then I would direct him to another Saviour, than Jeſus Chriſt.

For to tell chriſtians that in *ſome kinds* of trouble, they might juſtly ſeek for relief in reading a *play*, or wanton *Bucolic*, inſtead of the *Goſpel*; would be the ſame abſurdity, as to have told people in our Saviour's time, that in ſome ſorts of diſtreſs, they might juſtly have recourſe to *Simon Magus*, inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt.

22. But now to look back a little, I have conſidered the bulk of thoſe criſtians that are the moſt likely to be the doctor's readers, under two characters. The one as living ſome way or other in a partial, falſe, ſuperficial, or half ſtate of piety; the other as an awakened people, called by the ſpirit of God to come out of the common corruption of the times. I have ſhewn that the doctor's diſcourſe (where it is not diſliked) muſt do great hurt, and have dreadful effects upon thoſe two ſorts of people; the one ſort it ſeals up in a falſe ſecurity, ſleeping in the chambers of death, without any oil in their veſſels; the other it frightens, and diſcourages from their pious intentions of trimming their lamps with all diligence, and living upon the watch for the midnight call of the bridegroom's voice.

That I may therefore do all the good I can to both theſe ſorts of people, that I may awaken the one from their falſe ſecurity in their form of Godlineſs, and encourage the other to proceed with all earneſtneſs, after every degree of Chriſtian Holineſs; I ſhall before I proceed any further, lay down a ſhort account of the *whole ground* of the chriſtian religion, that every one may clearly ſee, why we want the

chriſtian religion to ſave us, what it is to do for us; and how it is done.

23. [1] Man was created a living image of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.

"2. This whole viſible world, as far as the ſtars, or any corporeal being reaches, takes up that extent of ſpace, where *Lucifer* and his angels before their fall, had their glorious kingdom. So far as this viſible frame of nature extends, ſo far was the extent of that kingdom. †

"3. That the *place* or *extent* of this world, was the place or extent of their kingdom, is probable from the two following reaſons: Firſt, becauſe the place of this world is now their habitation. For we muſt by no means ſuppoſe that God brought them from ſome other region into this world, only to tempt man. No: but they are here *now*, becauſe they were created to dwell *here*. For fallen angels do not leave the *place* of their ſin and fall; they live in the *defilements* and *diſorders* of their ſpoil'd kingdom; and in that place they find their hell and torment, where they extinguiſhed their light and joy. Secondly, becauſe the whole extent of this world, and every thing in it, *Sun*, *Moon*, *Stars*, *Fire*, *Air*, *Water*, and *Earth*, *Stones*, *Minerals*, muſt all be *diſſolved*, and paſs thro' a *purifying fire*. Therefore all theſe things are polluted, and have in them ſome diſorder from the fall of the angels; and we may ſee *how far* the place of their kingdom extended, by the extent of thoſe things that are to be *diſſolved* and *purified*.

"4. When the angels had, by their rebellion, loſt the divine life within themſelves, and brought their *whole outward* kingdom into darkneſs and diſorder, ſo that as *Moſes* ſpeaketh; "Darkneſs was upon the face of the deep;" that is, the whole extent of the place of this world; then in the *place* where they were fallen, and out of the *materials* of their ruined, angelical

† *N. B.* This, with ſeveral of the particulars that follow are probable, but not ſupported by ſcripture. This is the theory of *Jacob Behme*, ingenious, but quite incapable of proof.

ſical kingdom, did God begin the *creation* of this preſent, material, temporary, viſible world.

" 5. 'In the beginning, ſaith *Moſes*, God created the heaven and the earth.' Here, at this *inſtant*, ended the devil's power, over the place or kingdom in which he was created. As ſoon as the whole of his outward, diſordered kingdom was thus *divided* into a *created heaven and earth*, all was taken out of his hands, he was ſhut out of every thing, and he and all his hoſt became *poor priſoners* in their loſt kingdom, that could only *wander about* in chains of darkneſs, looking with impotent rage at the *created heaven and earth*, which was ſprung up in their own place of habitation.

" 6. Thus was this *outward kingdom*, of the whole extent of this world, taken out of the hands of *Lucifer* and his angels. All its darkneſs, diſharmony, and diſorder, was by the *creation* reſtored to a low reſemblance of its firſt ſtate, and put into that form of Sun, Stars, Fire, Air, Light, Water, and Earth, in which we now ſee it.

" 7. Into this world thus created out of the *ruins* of the kingdom of the fallen angels, was man introduced on the ſixth day of the creation, to take his place as lord and prince of it; to have power over all outward things, to diſcover and manifeſt the wonders of this new created world, and to bring forth ſuch an *holy offspring*, as might fill up the place of the fallen angels. And when certain periods of time had produced theſe great effects, then this *whole frame* was by the laſt *purifying fire*, to have been raiſed from its paradiſaical ſtate, into that *firſt heavenly* brightneſs and glory, in which it ſtood before the fall of *Lucifer*.

" 8. But the firſt man, thus created to be a prince of a new, angelical kingdom, ſtood not out his trial.

" 9. He came into this world in that *ſame glorious* body in which after the reſurrection, he ſhall *be like the angels in heaven*. For no other body, but that which was at *firſt* created ſhall riſe in Jeſus Chriſt. He only reſtores that which was loſt. The reſurrection will only take away what *ſin*, and *death*, and *earth*, had added to the *firſt created* body.

" 10. In this glorious body, did the firſt man ſtand in this world, incapable of receiving any hurt, or *knowing* evil from outward nature. The *Holy Ghoſt* was the *light* that illuminated all both within and without him.

" 11. Had he fix'd his will to be *eternally* what he was, had he deſired only to eat of the tree of life, to live by the word of God, he had been eſtabliſhed and confirmed an eternal angel, or divine man.

" 12. But his imagination wandered after the ſecrets of this outward world, after the knowledge of ſuch good and evil, as wrought an entire change in his nature.

" He turned from the tree of life to the forbidden fruit. And ſo he fell as deep into an *earthly life*, and the miſeries of the earth, as the devil fell into a *helliſh life*, and the miſeries of hell.

" 13. And here we may ſee as in a glaſs, what it is that earthly deſires *now do* to every ſon of *Adam*. They do all that which they did to the firſt man. They carry on, keep up, and continue that *ſame* death in us which he dy'd in paradiſe.

" 14. Thus it was, that *Adam* loſt the *light* of the Son of God, and the breath of the holy Spirit. And this was the *immediate death* that he dy'd in paradiſe, a death much more grievous than that which is to bring us all to our graves. It was a death that extinguiſhed all that was divine and holy in human nature, juſt as the ſin of angels turned them into devils. Now in looking at *this death*, we have the cleareſt view, of what our regeneration by the *ſecond Adam* means. For what can it be, but the reſtoration of that divine life which was loſt in *Adam* the *firſt?* For will any one ſay, that Chriſt is not in as high a degree, the *Reſtorer* of our nature, as *Adam* was the *deſtroyer* of it? Now tho' this great truth, ſeated in the very heart of the Chriſtian religion, ſpeaks at once the whole nature of regeneration; yet many learned men either not ſeeing or not *loving*, or being afraid *to own* it, have been forced, not only to miſtake, but wholly to ſink the moſt glorious article of the Chriſtian

tian faith? And inſtead of telling us the height and depth of the bleſſing of having the nature and life of Chriſt deriv'd into us, they can only teach us, what kind of word regeneration is—that it is a figurative expreſſion—and that our Saviour may be juſtified, for having made uſe of it. What learned pains do people take, to root up the belief of our having a new life in Chriſt? They run from *book* to *book*, from *language* to *language*; they conſult all criticks, ſearch all lexicons, to ſhew us, that according to the rules of true criticiſm, regeneration *need ſignify* no more, than the *federal* rite of baptiſm. Nay, what is ſtill worſe, they appeal to the poor notions of the blind, infatuated Jews! They produce the opinions which they had of a regeneration talk'd of, and a baptiſm us'd amongſt them, when they rejected and crucify'd our Saviour, to teach us, *what* we are to underſtand by our divine birth in Chriſt Jeſus! But if this be the uſe of learning among ourſelves, we need not look at *Rome*, or the ancient Rabbies of the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, to ſee what miſerable work learning can make with the Holy Scriptures. For it is ſure the true Meſſiah is not *rightly owned*, nor the Chriſtian religion *truly known*, till the ſoul is all love, and faith, and hunger, and thirſt after this new *life*, and real formation of Jeſus Chriſt in it: till without fear of *enthuſiaſm* it ſeeks, and expects all its redemption from it. But to return.

" 15. Man, thus dead to the divine life, thus deſtitute of the Son, and *Holy Spirit*, thus fallen into an *earthly nature*, under the dominion of an earthly world, which would afford him for a while a miſerable life, and then leave him to a more miſerable death; could do no more to replace himſelf in paradiſe, or to regain his firſt nature, than the devil could do to reſtore himſelf to his loſt glory.

" 16. But in this ſtate the *infinite mercy* of God met him. That love which at *firſt breath'd*, a holy and divine ſoul into him, now again breath'd a ſpark, or ray of divine light into him in the declaration of a *ſerpent bruiſer*: which ſpark of life ſhould in time do

all that which *Adam* ſhould have done; that is ſhould bring forth a *generation* of men, that ſhould become *ſons of God*, and take poſſeſſion of that kingdom from which the angels had fallen.

" 17. Here began the merciful myſtery of man's redemption; for this ſeed of divine life, was the Holy Jeſus, who from that time, ſtood in the place of the firſt man.

And from that time it may be ſaid in a true ſenſe that the *incarnation* of the ſon of God began; becauſe he was from that time enter'd again into the human nature, as a ſeed of its ſalvation, tho' not made manifeſt, till he was born in the Holy Virgin *Mary*. And in this ſenſe St. *John* ſays of him, *that he was the true light which lighteth every man, that cometh into the world.* Becauſe every man has from him this light, which if it is duly attended to, is our certain guide to Chriſt, born in the fulneſs of time, and ſacrific'd for us upon the croſs.

" 18. What we want from Chriſt, as our redeemer, is manifeſt by that which he gives to us, namely a redemption from the *hell* that is in our ſouls, and from the *death* and *corruption* that is in our bodies.

" 19. We are no more created to be in the ſorrows, and anguiſh of an *earthly life*, than the angels were created to be in the *darkneſs* of hell. It is as contrary to the *will* of God towards us, that we are out of paradiſe, as it is contrary to the deſign of God towards the angels, that ſome of them are *out* of heaven, priſoners of darkneſs.

The ſickneſs, pain and corruption of our bodies, is brought upon us by ourſelves, in the ſame manner as the dark, hideous forms of the devils are brought upon them. How abſurd, and even blaſphemous would it be, to ſay, with the ſcripture and the church, that we are by *nature*, *children of wrath*, *and born in ſin*, if we had that nature which God at firſt gave us? What a reproach upon God to ſay, that this world is a *valley of miſery*, a ſhadow of death, an habitation of *diſorders*, *ſnares*, *evils*, and *temptations*, if this was an original creation, or that ſtate of things in which

which God created us? Is it not as consistent with the goodness of God, to speak of the *misery* and *disorder* that holy angels find above, and of the vanity, emptiness and sorrow of the *heavenly state*, as to speak of the misery of *men*, and the sorrows of *this world*, if man and the world were in that order, in which God at first had plac'd them?

" 20. But by the mercy of God in Christ, this prison of an earthly life, is turn'd into a state of purification. It is made a time and place of putting off our *filthy* garments, and of *staying* and *sacrificing* that man of sin that is hid under them. And God suffers the *sun* to shine upon us, and the *elements* to afford us nourishment, for no other end, but that we may all have time and opportunity to hear the *call* of the Son of God, to be *born again*, to be renew'd by the *Holy Spirit*, and be made capable of that kingdom, from which *Lucifer* and his angels fell.

24. Look at our Saviour's sermon on the *mount*, and indeed at all his instructions, and you will find them pointing at nothing else on our *side*, but a *denial* of ourselves, and a *renunciation* of the world. And indeed how could it be otherwise! For if we want a Redeemer, only because we have *wander'd* out of paradise, and could not get back to it ourselves; if we are overcome by this world, only because our first father *sought* after it, what wonder is it that he who is to replace us in paradise, should call us to a *renunciation* of the world?

25. Vain man, taken with the *sound* of heavenly things, and *prospects* of future glory, yet at the same time a *fast friend* to the interests of flesh and blood, would fain compound matters between God and mammon. He is very willing to acknowledge a *Saviour*, that dy'd on the cross to save him. He is ready to receive outward *ordinances* and *forms* of worship, and to contend with zeal for the observance of them. He likes heaven, and future glory on these conditions. He is also ready to put on *outward morality*, to let religion polish his manners, that he may have the credit and ornament of a *prudential piety*, and a *decency* of

of life. This does no hurt. But to lay the axe to the *whole root* of our diſeaſe, to cut all thoſe *ſilken cords* aſunder, which tye us to the world, and the world to us, to deny every temper and paſſion that cannot be made holy, wiſe and heavenly; to die to every gratification which keeps up, and ſtrengthens the folly, vanity, pride, and blindneſs of our *fallen nature*; to leave no little morſels of ſenſuality, avarice and ambition for the *old man* to feed upon, however well cover'd under his mantle; this, tho' it be the very eſſence of religion on our part, is what he flies from with as much averſion as from *hereſy* and *ſchiſm*. Here he makes learned appeals to reaſon and common ſenſe to judge betwixt him, and the goſpel; which is juſt as wiſe, as to aſk the learned *Greek*, and the worldly *Jew*, whether the *croſs* of Chriſt be not fooliſhneſs, and a juſt rock of offence: or to appeal to fleſh and blood about the narrow way to that kingdom of heaven, into which itſelf cannot poſſibly have an entrance.

26. To ſeek for any thing in religion, but a *new nature* fitted for a new world, is knowing neither it, nor ourſelves. *To be born again*, is to be fit for paradiſe in whatever part of the univerſe we live. *Not to be born again*, is continuing where the ſin and death of *Adam* left us, whatever church, or ſect of religion we have fellowſhip with. All ways and opinions, all forms and modes of worſhip, ſtand on the outſide of religion. They certainly are helps to the kingdom of God, when we conſider them only as the *gate* to that *inward life*, which we want. But this is unqueſtionably true, that our *ſalvation* conſiſts wholly in our inward renewal by the Holy Ghoſt. When this begins, our ſalvation begins; as this goes on, our ſalvation goes on; when this is finiſh'd, our ſalvation is finiſh'd. This alone ſaves the ſoul, becauſe this alone reſtores the firſt paradiſaical, divine nature, which is the true image of God, and which alone can enter into the kingdom of heaven.

27. If we had only a *notional knowledge* that our firſt father had ſinn'd, and knew no more of his *ſinful*

condition

condition than hiſtory tells us of it; if we had only certain *inſtituted types* and *figures* to keep up the remembrance of it in our minds, we ſhould be never the worſe for his ſins. We ſhould have no hurt by *owning* ourſelves to be children of a ſinful father, if his nature, *life* and *ſpirit* were not propagated in us. So, if we have only a *notional belief* that Jeſus is become the *ſecond Adam*, to redeem, and regenerate the fallen nature; if we know this only in the *notion* and hiſtory kept up in our minds by *outward* figures and *ordinances*: tho' we contend ever ſo much for this belief of a Saviour, and write *volumes* in defence of it; yet he is not our Saviour, till his nature, life and ſpirit, be in us. If there be any man in the world, in whom the *nature* of *Adam* is not, he has no *ſin* from *Adam*. If there be any man in whom the life of Jeſus is not, he has no *righteouſneſs* from him. We muſt have life and righteouſneſs in the ſame *truth* and *reality* in us from the ſecond *Adam*, as we have ſin and death in us from the firſt.

28. The whole matter is this: Chriſt, by the overſhadowing of the holy ſpirit, became in the *Virgin Mary*, of the ſame nature with that *firſt man*, which was created in Paradiſe; who according to the *purpoſe* of God, was to have been the father of an holy *race* of men. But ſeeing the firſt *Adam* failed in this *deſign* of God, the wiſdom of God provided a *ſecond Adam*, who was born in the *ſame degree* of perfection, in which the firſt man was created. To this holy paradiſaical human nature the *ſon* of God was perſonally united. And thus Chriſt the ſecond *Adam*, took the place of the firſt, and ſtands as the ſecond father of all the ſons of *Adam*. Now as we are *earthly*, corrupt, and *worldly* men, by having the *nature* and *life* of the firſt *Adam* propagated in us, ſo we muſt become *holy* and heavenly men, by having the life and nature of the ſecond *Adam* derived into us; or as the ſcripture ſpeaks, by being *born again*. Jeſus Chriſt therefore helps us by a *ſecond* birth, to ſuch an *holy*, *and undefiled* nature, as he himſelf received in the *bleſſed Virgin*, and which we ſhould have received in *Paradiſe* from our *firſt father*.

Thus

Thus by faith in Christ we put *on Christ*, he is *formed in us*; we eat his *flesh* and drink *his blood*, and have his *nature* and *life* in us.

Thus we are real members, living branches, and new born children of God.

29. Look now at *yourselves*, at the *world*, at *religion*, in this true light, and surely you must see the desirable nature of every virtue, and every degree of it, which the gospel sets before you. Surely you must awaken into a strong abhorrence of every thing that the fall has brought upon you; whether it be in your *souls*, your *bodies*, or the state of the world into which you are fallen. To renounce the poor interests of a worldly life, to be content with a *pilgrim's fare* in it, to live looking and longing after that which you have lost; to have no more of covetousness, of pride, of vanity and ambition, than *John* the Baptist had; to live unto God in your *shops*, your *employments* and estates, with such thoughts and desires of going to your heavenly father, as the lost son had when he saw his poor condition, eating *husks* among *swine*, is only a proof that you are, like him, come to yourselves, that you begin to see *what*, and how, and where you are. Surely you can need no exhortations to run to your redeemer, to beseech him to do every thing in you and for you that your corrupted heart, and polluted body are in need of. He now stands as near you, as full of love to you, as he did to *Lazarus* when he raised him from the dead. He is no farther from your call than he was from the call of blind *Bartimæus*.

30. Surely it should be as needless to exhort you to look earnestly after every means of recovering your first glorious state, as to exhort the blind to receive their sight, the sick to accept of health, or the captive to suffer his chains to be taken off. For when you see your *misery* and your *redemption*, both of them so exceeding great, you see *something* that must needs penetrate the depth of your soul, that leaves you no room to *doubt* about the nature of any virtue; no liberty to indulge *one vain* passion, or to think it

any

any hardſhip that the goſpel calls you to be *perfect*. For in this light every virtue of the goſpel ſtands recommended to us, as *health*, *purity* and *ſight* ſtand recommended to a *ſick*, *noiſome*, *blind leper*, who was ſhut up in a place that continually increaſed all his evils.

It ſtrips us of nothing, but the *uncleanneſs* of leproſies, the *miſeries* of ſores, pains and blindneſs. It takes nothing from the world which is about us, but its poiſon and power of infecting us.

So that to be called to the height of all virtue, however exceſſive it may ſeem to the *reaſonings* of fleſh and blood, is only being called away from every *miſery* and *evil* that can be avoided by us.

31. No virtue therefore has any *blameable extreme* in it, till it *contradicts* this general end of religion, till it *hinders* the reſtoration of the divine image in us, or makes us *leſs fit* to appear amongſt the inhabitants of heaven. *Abſtinence*, *temperance*, *mortification* of the ſenſes and paſſions, can have no exceſs, till they hinder the purification of the ſoul, or make the body leſs ſubſervient to it. *Charity* can have no exceſs, till it contracts that love which we are to have in heaven, till it is more than that which would lay down its life even for an enemy, till it exceeds that which the firſt chriſtians practiſed, when they had all things common; till it exceeds that of St. *John*, who requires him that has two coats, to give to him that has none; till it is loving our poor brethren more than Chriſt has loved us; till it goes beyond the command of loving our neighbour as we love ourſelves.

32. See now how the doctor inſtructs his readers on thoſe two great articles, chriſtian *temperance* and *charity*. To remove reſtraints of the firſt kind he ſays, Our Saviour came eating and drinking, was preſent at weddings, and other entertainments. The doctor may go on, and prove theſe indulgences to be good and pious, becauſe what our Saviour work'd a miracle to promote muſt needs be ſo. And ſo the adding another bottle, when friends are rejoicing, may be made a Chriſtian duty.

But

But I must vindicate the life and example of our blessed Lord from the indignity done to it by the doctor. Our blessed Lord came indeed, as he says of himself eating and drinking. But in what manner? In what sense, did he say this of himself? Why it was in distinction from *John the Baptist*, who came eating only one sort of food. And it was to shew the *Jews* their great guilt in this respect, that nothing could do them any good. For the mortification of the Baptist they condemned, as coming from the devil, and the condescension of the holy Jesus in coming to their tables, they accused as gluttony and wine-bibbing. Now the doctor is plainly doing what our Lord accused the *Jews* of; he with them condemns the mortification of the Baptist, as coming from the devil. But he differs from the *Jews* in this that he does not condemn, but *approves* of our Lord, as a *friend* to feasts, and merry meetings.

33. Our Saviour, suitable to his gracious love, in coming into the world, sought the conversation of sinners and publicans, because he came to save that which was lost, and because he knew that some amongst such sinners were more moveable, than the proud sanctity of the learned Pharisees. But may we thence conclude, that the lives of such sinners were not blameable in his sight? Is not this as well, as to imagine he favoured the indulgences of feasting, and good fellowship, because he was found there? The holy Jesus conversed more freely, spoke of himself and of the kingdom of God more divinely to a wicked woman of *Samaria* than he appears to have done to his disciples. May we thence conclude, that he approved of a woman of that character, or thereby set his seal to the goodness, and lawfulness of her way of living? Is not this as well, as to make his presence at a wedding an approbation of the usual indulgences of such feasts?

34. O holy Jesus, thou didst nothing of thyself; thou soughtest only the glory of thy father, from the beginning to the end of thy life. Thou spentest whole nights in prayer in mountains and desert places;

ces; thou hadſt not where to lay thy head. Thy common poor fare with thy diſciples was *barley bread* and *dryed fiſh*. Thy miraculous power never help'd thee to any dainties or refreſhment, tho' ever ſo much fatigued. But yet becauſe this holy Jeſus came into the world to ſave all ſorts of ſinners, and to ſhew that every kind and degree of ſin could be taken away by him, therefore he came into all places, and entered into all ſorts of companies. He did not as the Baptiſt, tie himſelf to *one ſort* of food. But he came eating and drinking. But why did he ſo? It was that he might reprove, and convert ſinners at their own tables. He came not to indulge himſelf, or to find ſuch gratifications as the baptiſt abſtained from; but to work miracles, to awaken ſinners in the midſt of their indulgences.

It is ſaid, that wherever the King is, there is the court. But with much more reaſon may it be ſaid, that where ever our Saviour came, there was the temple or the church. He came to *feaſts* and *entertainments* with the ſame ſpirit, for the ſame end, and in the ſame divine power, as he went to raiſe a *dead corpſe*, namely to ſhew forth the glory of God. Wherever he came, it was in the *ſpirit* and *power* of the redeemer of mankind; every thing he did was only to deſtroy the works of the devil, to deliver man from his power, raiſe the dead, and give ſight to the blind, and ears to the deaf. It made no difference to him, whether he did this in the temple, or in the ſtreets, at a feaſt or at a funeral. As he was every where God, ſo every place became holy to him. Laſtly, if our Saviour, was preſent, at chearful entertainments, to ſhew his *approbation* of ſuch indulgences. How came *John the Baptiſt*, that ſevere maſter of mortification, to be a fit preparer of the way to the kingdom of Heaven? Surely his voice muſt cry wrong, if ſuch mortification was not right.

And if our Saviour diſapproved of the ſeverity of his life and manners, how came he to point him out as a burning and ſhining light? Thus much may

ſerve to vindicate our Saviour's example from the ſhocking miſapplication the doctor has made of it.

35. Let us now ſee how he treats, and inſtructs the charitable chriſtian in theſe words.

" What ſays the *half-thinker*, is not charity to the poor, a moſt excellent thing? And can I be too charitable? Can I therefore beſtow too much upon the poor? I anſwer, tho' you cannot be too charitable, yet you may beſtow too much upon the poor, to the ruin of your wife and children, which is not charity, but madneſs, and a great and *moſt grievous ſin.* Did you never hear that *charity begins at home?* Did you never read that of *St. Paul? If any provide not for his own, and eſpecially thoſe of his own houſe: he hath deny'd the faith, and is worſe than an infidel?*"

The doctor's proverb I ſhall leave to himſelf; but the text of St. *Paul*, which he has as groſſly miſapplied, as he did our Saviour's miracle, I muſt take out of his hands. St. *Paul*'s words are quoted to prove, that it is madneſs, a great and grievous ſin, for any one through charity to the poor to render himſelf unable to provide for his wife and children. Now the apoſtle in this place ſpeaks no more about this ſin, than he ſpeaks againſt the ſin of watching and prayer. Nay, what is more, there is not in all his writings, or in the whole New Teſtament, the *leaſt ſuppoſition* or *hint* that ſuch a ſin ever was, or would be committed. The apoſtle was ſingly ſpeaking of *ſuch women*, as were to be taken into the order of widows for the ſervice of the church, and to be maintained by it. Verſe 4. he ſays, that ſuch widows as had children or nephews that could ſupport them, were not to be maintained by the church. And to ſuch ſons and nephews who have mothers and aunts that thus want their aſſiſtance, he ſays, *If any one provide not for his own, eſpecially for theſe of his own houſe*, i. e. If any ſons or nephews have mothers or aunts become deſolate widows, and take not care to aſſiſt them, eſpecially if they live with them, ſuch have renounced

nounced the piety of the gospel, and have not so much humanity as infidels.

36. This alone is the plain doctrine of the apostle, which the doctor has grosly perverted, to the condemning of that which he never thought of. On the contrary, the scripture abounds with passages which might perfuade us, that no family could ever be ruin'd by the alms and charity of its father; *I have been young, and now am old,* saith the psalmist, *Yet never saw I the righteous forsaken or his seed begging their bread.*

The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered again. They that cannot believe this, want the faith of christians. Had any one in the Apostle's time reduced his wife and children to want, by his great charity to the poor, the apostle would have been so far from rebuking him, as a half thinking fool, or exposing him to others, as guilty of madness, and grievous sin, that he would have told them, that he had consecrated himself and family to the church, that he and they were thereby become the dear objects of the church's care and love, since their present distress was brought upon them by a boundless love and compassion for the poor.

I will now put the following *case* in as high terms as the doctor can well desire. Let it be supposed that some good *bishop*, possessed of as rich a *bishopric* as that of *Winchester*, should through his extensive charity for the poor throughout the whole diocese, be forc'd to use the utmost frugality in family expences, and to bring up his children in employments of labour, to help themselves to food and raiment; one a carpenter, in which business our Saviour is said to have laboured in his youth; another a maker of tents, the trade of the great apostle; and the rest in the like manner. Let it be supposed, that when he dy'd, he left only *twenty pounds* a year amongst them, not to be *possessed* by any one of them, but only to be used by every one as sickness or age made them stand in need of it, with this injunction, that it should be given to other sick and helpless people, when there

was no ſuch amongſt themſelves: Let it be ſuppoſed that by his life and converſation, he had fill'd his wife and children with the true and perfect ſpirit of the goſpel, that they lov'd and rejoic'd in his memory for all the good he had done to them, deſiring nothing, but to go through the world, in the ſame *humility*, *piety*, *charity*, *love* of God, and *renunciation* of the world, as he had done. Will the doctor ſay that this *biſhop* had *ruin'd* his wife and children; that *half thinking* had betrayed him into a moſt *grievous ſin*, that he had by this life *deny'd the faith*, and become *worſe* than an infidel? I will venture to ſay, that if ſuch a biſhop ſhould ever appear in this kingdom, he would bid fair to put an end to infidelity through all his dioceſe, though it were the largeſt in the nation. Now if the doctor does not know of any one either among the *laity* or *clergy*, who is *ruining* his wife and children by a greater and more blameable charity than that of this biſhop, it muſt be ſaid, that he has been in too much haſte, that his zeal has not proceeded from *knowledge*; and that he has been throwing *cold water* upon charity, before there was any flame in it.

37. I now proceed to ſhew in a more general way the blameable nature of the doctor's diſcourſe. The whole chriſtian world from the time of our Saviour to this day, has been praying, *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is heaven.* Sacraments, divine worſhip, and the order of the clergy, are appointed as miniſterial helps for this end, to raiſe, ſet up, and eſtabliſh this kingdom of God on earth. The fall of man brought forth the kingdom of this world; ſin in all ſhapes is nothing elſe but the will of man, following the workings of a nature *broken off* from its dependency upon, and union with the divine will. All the evil and miſery in the creation ariſes *ſolely* from this one cauſe. There is not the ſmalleſt degree of pain or puniſhment either within us, or without us, but is owing to this, viz. that man ſtands out of his place, is not *in*, and *under*, and *united* to God as he ſhould be, as the nature of things requires. God

created

created every thing to partake of his *own nature*, to have ſome ſhare of his *own life* and happineſs. Nothing can be good or evil, happy or unhappy, but as it does or does not ſtand in the ſame *divine life* in which it was created, receiving in God, and from God, all that good that it is capable of, and ſo co-operating with, and under him, according to the nature of its powers and perfections. As ſoon as it turns to its ſelf, and would as it were have a ſound of its *own*, it breaks off from the *divine harmony*, and falls into the miſery of its own *diſcord*; and all its workings then are only ſo many ſorts of torments. The redemption of mankind can then only be effected, the harmony of the creation can only then be reſtored when the will of God is the will of every creature. For this reaſon our bleſſed Lord having taken upon him a created nature, ſo continually declares againſt the doing any thing of himſelf, and always appeals to the will of God, as the only motive and end of every thing he did, ſaying, that it was his meat and drink, to do the will of him that had ſent him.

38. What now can be ſo deſirable to a ſenſible man, as to have the vain, diſorderly paſſions of his heart remov'd from him, to be fill'd with ſuch unity, love, and concord, as flow from God, to ſtand united to, and co-operating with the divine goodneſs, willing nothing, but what God wills, loving nothing, but what God loves, and doing all the Good he can to every creature, from the principle of love and conformity to God. Then the kingdom of God is come and his will is done in that ſoul, as it is done in heaven. Then heaven itſelf is in the ſoul, and the life and converſation of the ſoul is in heaven. From ſuch a man the curſe of this world is removed; he walks upon conſecrated ground, and every thing he meets, every thing that happens to him, helps forward his union and communion with God. For when we receive every thing from God, and do every thing for God, every thing does us the *ſame good*, and helps us to the ſame degree of happineſs. *Sickneſs*, and *health*, *proſperity* and *adverſity*, bleſs and purify ſuch a

ſoul; as it turns every thing *toward God*, ſo every thing becomes *divine* to it. For he that ſeeks God in every thing, is ſure to *find* God in every thing. When we thus live wholly unto God, God is wholly ours, and we are then happy in all the happineſs of God. This is the purity and perfection, that we pray for in the Lord's prayer, that *God's kingdom may come*, and *his will be done in us, as it is in heaven.*

39. And this we may be ſure is not only *neceſſary*, but *attainable* by us, or our Saviour would not have made it a part of our daily prayer. It may then juſtly be aſked, have we yet obtained that, which we have been ſo long, and ſo univerſally praying for? Can we look upon the church of this nation, as drawing *near*, or even *tending* to this ſtate of perfection? Can we be carry'd to any one pariſh, either in town or country where it can with truth be ſaid of any *one paſtor* and his *flock*, that there the kingdom of God is *coming* and his will *begins* to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven? Can we therefore find any *one pariſh*, where the *paſtor* has not *great* reaſon to reject the doctor's diſcourſe, and to pray both for himſelf and his flock, that they may enter *much farther* into the ſpirit and practice of chriſtianity, than they have yet enter'd, that the goſpel may have *much greater* power over them, than it hath yet had; and that they all *ſee* what it is that he made ſo *divine*, and *powerful* a religion, ſo without its *proper effect* upon them? For if the caſe be thus, if we ſtand at this amazing diſtance from that ſtate of perfection to which Chriſt has called us, do not *heaven* and *earth* ſeem to call upon *every miniſter* of the goſpel, to take *ſome ſhare* to himſelf of this *miſerable ſtate* of things, and to endeavour to convince both *himſelf*, and his *flock*, that they have not yet been Chriſtians in *true earneſt*, that they have profeſſed Chriſt with the tempers of *Jews* and *Heathens*, that they have not yet enough *renounc'd* the world, not enough *deny'd* themſelves, not enough *emptied* their hearts of paſſions hurtful to piety, not enough *offered* and devoted themſelves to God, not enough made the ſpirit of religion the ſpirit of their lives, not enough fought for ſtrength and deliverance

rance from ſin, by a *firm* and *living faith* in Jeſus Chriſt; not enough pray'd and deſir'd that they might be born again of God, ſo that Chriſt may be truly formed in them; not enough prayed and deſired to be every where, and on all occaſions under the perpetual influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, that they may think and ſay, and do every thing by his holy inſpiration; not enough look'd to that firſt and great commandment, of loving God with our whole heart and ſtrength: not enough endeavour'd to keep the next, that of loving our neighbour, as ourſelves; not enough renounced ſuch faſhions, cuſtoms, and conformities to the world, as corrupt the heart, and grieve and ſeparate the holy ſpirit from it.

40. Now which way ſoever we conſider the lamentable ſtate of religion amongſt us, no remedy can be procured by us of the *clergy*, but in this one way, that every *individual* of the order, from the higheſt to the loweſt, begin in right earneſt with himſelf, open the book of his own heart and life, and conſider ſeriouſly in the preſence of God, whether, according to his degree in the eccleſiaſtical function, the world has had its *due* ſhare of *ſalt* and *light* from him; whether all that is in the world, the *luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes*, and the *pride of life* have been ſo openly, ſo conſtantly diſcourag'd, and renounc'd by him, that the whole form of his life has been one loud, continual call to all orders of chriſtians, to ſet their affections on things above, to mind only the one thing needful, to have nothing at heart, but to be in Chriſt new creatures, ſeeking, intending, deſiring nothing, through the pilgrimage of this life, but to live *unſpotted from the world*, and to obtain every height of holineſs, and heavenly affections, which becomes thoſe who are called to be ſons, and heirs of God with Chriſt Jeſus.

41. If religion was at this time in a moſt flouriſhing ſtate amongſt us, abounding with ſuch congregations as made up the primitive church, it would be great injuſtice to ſuppoſe that the clergy had not, under

der God, been the chief inſtruments of building it up to ſuch a ſtate of perfection. Seeing then an univerſal corruption of manners is on all hands confeſs'd, to have overſpread this chriſtian nation, and the true ſpirit of religion is hardly any where to be ſeen, nothing can be more reaſonable than for every *clergyman*, wherever his lot is fallen, to ſuſpect himſelf to have, in ſome degree, contributed to this common calamity, and to try to diſcover his own ſtate, by ſuch queſtions as theſe, laid *home* to his conſcience. If chriſtianity has not done that to my flock which is the *only end* of it, is there nothing of this failure chargeable upon my conduct over it? Can my righteous judge lay nothing to my charge on that account? Can my own heart bear me witneſs that I was not driven by *human paſſions*, but ſtay'd and waited till the Holy ſpirit call'd me to this office? Have I not undertaken the care of other ſouls, before I had any true and real care of my own? Have I not preſum'd to convert and ſtrengthen others, before I was converted myſelf? To preach by hearſay of the grace, and mercy, and ſalvation of the goſpel, whilſt I myſelf was an obedient ſlave to ſin? Have I not taken upon me to lay open the myſteries of God's love in Chriſt Jeſus, before they had had their *proper entrance* into my own ſoul? Have my own repentance, compunction, deep ſenſe of the burden of ſin, and want of a Saviour taught me how to make the terrors of the Lord known in the deep of every man's heart, and to awaken and pierce the conſciences of ſinners? Has, my own *true and living faith* in Chriſt my Saviour, my own experience of the atoning, cleanſing, ſanctifying powers of his precious blood, enabled me with great boldneſs to tell all ſinners, that to the *faith which worketh by love*, Chriſt always and infallibly ſaith, what he ſaid in the goſpel, *Thy ſins are forgiven*; *thy faith has ſaved thee*; *go in peace*.

42. Can my own heart, and God who is greater than our hearts, bear me witneſs that in my ſacred office I have not ſought myſelf, or my own things, but the things of Jeſus Chriſt? If I have chang'd one

flock

flock or ſtation for another, or added one cure to another, have I done it in *ſingleneſs of heart*, as unto the Lord and not for myſelf? Has all that I have ſought or done of this kind, been only from this motive, that I might be more faithful to him that hath call'd me, and be more and more ſpent and *ſacrificed* for the ſalvation of ſouls? Have I neglected no means of fitting and preparing myſelf for the illumination of God's Holy Spirit, which alone can enable me in any meaſure to ſpeak to and work upon the hearts and conſciences of men? Have I earneſtly long'd, and labour'd after every kind and degree of inward and outward holineſs, and purity of *body*, *ſoul*, and *ſpirit*, that my ſtanding at the altar may be acceptable to God, and my prayers and interceſſions for my flock avail much before him? Has my own ſelf-denial, renunciation of the world, and love of the croſs of Chriſt, enabled me to preach up thoſe duties in their full extent? Has my own ſtrictly pious uſe of the things of this world, my own readineſs to aſſiſt every creature to the utmoſt of my ability fitted me to call others to theſe things with power and authority? Have all ages and conditions of people under my care had their proper inſtruction and warning from me, ſo that I have ſpared no folly, vanity, indulgence, or conformity to the world, that hurt mens ſouls, and hinder their progreſs in piety? Have I done all that by my prayers and preaching, life and example, which Chriſt expects from thoſe whom he has enjoin'd to feed his ſheep? Can my flock by looking at me ſee what virtues they want? Can they by following me, be led to every kind and degree of chriſtian perfection! Laſtly, has the will of God been the beginning and end, the reaſon and motive, the rule and meaſure, of my liking or diſliking, doing or not doing every thing among thoſe people with whom I have liv'd as their miniſter?

43. Theſe are a few of ſuch queſtions as the preſent ſtate of religion in this *iſland* calls every miniſter to try himſelf by. For as the order of the clergy, is inſtituted for no other end, but for the preſerving of

true

true piety in the world; ſo when any age is more than ordinarily ſunk in vice and impiety, the *whole order* of the clergy, and *every member* of it, have great reaſon not only to be deeply afflicted, but greatly affrighted at it and to ſuſpect their own conduct, ſince that which is their particular work, has had ſo *little* ſucceſs. They have great reaſon to apprehend, that it is ſome degeneracy of ſpirit, ſome general negligence, ſome want of example, ſome failure in doctrine, ſome defect in zeal and care of their particular flocks, that *too much* contributes to ſo *general a corruption* of manners. This does not ſuppoſe, that it is in the power of our order to regulate the manners of people as we pleaſe; it only ſuppoſes, that of all human means it has the *greateſt effect*, and that when any nation or people are *very bad*, it behoves the clergy, who have any *right ſenſe* of the nature of our order, any *true love* for our brethren of it, to awaken and ſtir up one another to a faithful diligence in our callings; not ſuch as may ſecure us from public ſcandal, and the laws of the land, but ſuch diligence as the nature of our office, the ſpirit of the goſpel, and the preſent decay of religion call for. Let us beſeech one another, deeply to conſider the great need that this poor nation hath of a *zealous*, *pious*, *exemplary*, *diſintereſted* and *laborious* clergy; to conſider the dreadful judgments of God, that may juſtly be expected to fall firſt upon our own heads, if this, only remedy is not procured by all of us, according to the utmoſt of our ability. It is now no time for eaſe, indulgence or worldly repoſe; all is to be renounced, all is to be ſacrificed. Our religion is founded on this doctrine.——That we are to be born again of the holy ſpirit,—— that there is no ſanctification of the heart, no illumination of the mind, no knowledge of divine myſteries, no love of holy things, poſſible to be had, but in and by the motion and life of this holy ſpirit in us;—— that its life, motion and power in us, increaſe according to our faith, prayers and deſires of it.

44. Is it not now a flat denial of all this to ſay, as do ſome, that the eſtabliſhment of the goſpel in the world,

world, together with the assistances of *human learning*, and *languages*, has been the occasion why the assistance of the Holy Ghost is abated? For if we consult either scripture or experience, must it not be said, that *worldly peace* and *prosperity* want *as much* to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit, as *persecution* and *distress*? That *human learning* and *knowledge* need as *high degrees* of divine grace, as human ignorance? Is not the blindness, and corruption of *men of letters*, as notorious as that of *unlearned* men? Does an *editor of Terence*, *Horace* or *Virgil*, receive such illumination from *plays* and *poetry*? Do *cardinals* and *pluralists* receive so much *unction* from human establishments as to need less to be govern'd by the Holy Spirit of God? Or will we say, that a *critical study* of divided languages, and a religion established in worldly ease and peace, are not only in themselves free from danger and corruption, but have so much of the nature of the Holy Spirit in them, that they can be to us in *his stead*, and make his sanctifying operations upon us needed in a *less degree*?

45. On the part of God, our *redemption* in Jesus Christ, and our *sanctification* by the Holy Ghost, stand always in the *same degree* of *nearness* and *fulness* to all of us. There is hardly a chapter in the New Testament that can be understood, but upon the supposition of this great truth. If Christ is less formed in us than he was in the first saints of the church, if we come not to the *perfect man*, *to the measure of the stature* of the *fulness of Christ*, it is not because Christ is now become only our redeemer in an ordinary way; but it is because we have not so counted all things but *dung*, that we might win Christ, as the first saints did. If the Holy Spirit does not now in *such a degree* renew, quicken, move, and sanctify our hearts, and fill us with *such degrees* of divine light and love, as was done in the first age of the church, it is not because this sanctifying spirit has committed *some part* of his work to *human learning*, and so it become only our sanctifier in a lesser and *ordinary degree*, but it is because we ourselves have *forsaken this fountain of living waters, and hewed*

hewed out broken ciſterns for ourſelves; it is becauſe we have grieved this Holy Spirit, *reſiſted* his motions, and under an *outward profeſſion* of Chriſt have kept up that *old man, with his deeds*, which cannot be the habitation of the Holy Spirit.

If therefore we have any true ſenſe of the nature and weight of our eccleſiaſtical calling, any deſire to do the *full work* of the miniſtry, to ſatisfy the neceſſities of our flocks; if we have any fear of being condemn'd as *uſeleſs* labourers in Chriſt's vineyard, it is high time to awake from this dream of an ordinary and extraordinary ſanctification of the Holy Spirit. It ſerves only to keep us *unſanctify'd*, ſhut up in death, in our own corrupted nature, to keep us *learnedly* content with our ſtate, as if we were *rich* and *increaſed* in *goods*, and *had need* of *nothing*: and hinders us from knowing that we are *wretched* and *miſerable, and poor, and blind and naked.*

46. Several of the clergy, whoſe lot is fallen in this corrupt age, may be ſuppos'd to have taken upon them the ſacred office, and to have liv'd in it, not enough according to the nature and ſpirit of it, merely through the *degeneracy* of the times, and from a conſideration that they are well enough, according to the religion that now paſſes in the world. And perhaps there are few, if any of the order, however eminent for good works, whoſe virtues have not receiv'd *ſome abatement* from the ſame cauſe—This therefore may be added as another reaſon why all the clergy of this land muſt in the ſpirit of martyrdom awaken the world into a faith and love of the goſpel. Now is the time that we muſt *give up* all our worldly regards, *forſake all that we have, that we muſt hate father and mother, wife and children, and brothers and ſiſters, yea and our own lives alſo*, or we cannot be faithful miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt. The ſame ſpirit which firſt planted the goſpel, is now required to *recover* and *reſtore* it amongſt us. We muſt break off our chains of worldly prudence, and come forth in the ſpirit and power of the goſpel: ſo live, and ſpeak, and act, whether in the pulpit or out of it, that all who ſee and hear

hear us may be forced to confeſs that God is in us of a truth. A *miniſtry* that have not this power, that have not *full proof*, both to themſelves and others, that the holy ſpirit is thus *with them*, opening the kingdom of God in their own ſouls, and enabling them to preach it to others with ſpirit and power, are to anſwer to God for their want of it.

47. To aſk whether the aſſiſtance of the holy ſpirit is to be *ordinary* or *extraordinary*, is as needleſs a diſtinction, as to aſk whether a *miniſter* of the goſpel ought to be an ordinary or extraordinary man. The operation of the holy ſpirit in us ſince the fall, is a ſupernatural power, and therefore in a juſt ſenſe always extraordinary: becauſe enabling us to be and do that, which the ordinary power of fallen nature is inſufficient for. But it is more or leſs reſtored to us, as we are more or leſs fitted to receive it.

The Chriſtian religion has not had its proper effect, till it has ſo ſet up the kingdom of God among us, that *his will is done on earth, as it is done in heaven.*

This is the perfection that every Chriſtian, is to *aſpire* after. And if they who are to be taught, are to be thus empty'd of all worldly paſſions, thus dead to the workings of ſelf-will, that the ſpirit of God may be all in all in them, what manner of men ought they to be, who are to *teach*, *promote*, *advance*, and *lead* the way to this purity and perfection? At what a diſtance ought he to be from every *appearance* of pride, that is to draw others to live and practiſe the profound humility of the bleſſed Jeſus? How ought he to humble his body, and be ſteady in all kinds of ſelf-denial, who would convince his flock, that *they who ſow to the fleſh reap* deſtruction? How heavenly minded, how devoted to God, how attentive to the one thing needful, how unſpotted from the world ought he to be, who is to perſuade others that they cannot poſſibly *ſerve God and mammon?* How empty ought he to be of all *worldly* policy, all arts and methods of *ambition*, who is to fix it deep in the hearts of his hearers, that *unleſs they become as little chil-*

dren they cannot enter into the kingdom of God? What open hands, and open heart ought he to have, what an extent of charity ought to be viſible in him, who is to bring his flock to this faith, that *it is more bleſſed to give than to receive?* How remarkably, undeniably plain, open, ſincere, undeſigning, and faithful ſhould he be, who is to plant, and eſtabliſh ſincerity, plainneſs, ſimplicity, truth and innocence amongſt his flock? There is ſuch a neceſſary fitneſs in theſe things, that the power of religion, muſt be much prevented, when its precepts are recommended by ſuch as excuſe themſelves from the plain and open practice of them.

48. The office of the miniſtry is of the higheſt nature; it is a truſt which no language can ſufficiently expreſs; and the unfaithful diſcharge of it is of all conditions in life the moſt dreadful. To be charged with the death and blood of ſouls, by that God who laid down his life to redeem them, is a condemnation that will carry more of guilt and puniſhment in it than any other. Would you know the office of a Chriſtian paſtor, you muſt look at the office of Chriſt. Would you know what manner of ſpirit he ought to be of, you muſt look at the ſpirit of Chriſt. For the work of the miniſtry is only the work of Chriſt committed to other hands, who are to ſupply his abſence, to be here in his ſtead, to be doing the ſame things, and with the ſame ſpirit that he did, till the end of the world.

Nothing is ſo highly honourable as to bear a part in the prieſthood of Chriſt, and be employ'd in the work of the miniſtry. But then it ſhould be *well conſidered*, that it is only honourable in the *ſame ſenſe*, as it is honourable to ſuffer as a martyr. It is an honour that is as different from all worldly figure and diſtinction, as the glory of Chriſt upon the croſs is different from the triumph of an earthly prince. When therefore we think of the *honour* and *dignity* of the paſtoral function, we ſhould be careful to remember, that it is only the honour of dying a martyr, an honour of humbling, abaſing, and ſacrificing ourſelves with

with Chriſt, and continuing the exerciſe of his ſuffering-prieſthood for the ſalvation of the world. The holy function is often conſidered only as an authoritative commiſſion to miniſter in holy things. But it is much more than this. It is a call and command to act with the ſpirit of Chriſt, to repreſent his purity, to continue his holineſs, to bear a part of his ſacrifice, and devote themſelves for the good of others, as he did. A prieſt that has only his ordination to diſtinguiſh him, wants as much to make him a true prieſt, as *Judas* wanted to make him a true apoſtle. For tho' holineſs alone gives no man a commiſſion to exerciſe the paſtoral office, yet all who are called to it, are as much ordained to a peculiar holineſs, as to the adminiſtration of the ſacraments.

49. For the ſacred office is God's appointment, to continue through all ages, the ſpirit and power of Chriſt for reconciling men to God in the ſame manner and by the ſame means of holineſs, ſacrifice and devotion, which Chriſt exerciſed when he was upon earth. We need no other proofs of this, than this one ſaying of our Lord: *As my father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you.* That is, for all the ends for which I am come into the world, for all the ſame ends I ſend you into it; to be there in my ſtead, to ſupply my abſence, to carry on the work that I have begun, to act with my ſpirit, to continue the exerciſe of my love, and labour, and ſuffering for the ſalvation of mankind. Now to be ſent by our Lord for the ſame ends as he was ſent into the world, is ſuch an appointment of us to all kinds of holineſs, as can never be rightly diſcharged, but by our devoting ourſelves wholly and abſolutely unto God.

Imagine that you had liv'd with our bleſſed Lord upon earth, that you had learn'd the dignity and divinity of his perſon, that you had ſeen the love which he bore to mankind, that you had enter'd into the glorious deſigns of his kingdom, which was to convert the inhabitants of the earth, poor

creatures of flesh and blood, into sons of God and heirs of eternal glory.

Imagine that you had seen him after his resurrection, when he had redeemed the world, conquer'd sin, death and hell, and was about to take possession of his throne; imagine that then, you had seen him commission some of his followers to be priests and intercessors with God on earth, as he had been, to feed and nourish, and watch over his flock, as he had done, to go before them in such exemplary holiness, such love of God, such compassion for sinners, such contempt of the world, such poverty of spirit, such obedience and resignation, as they had him for an ensample. Had you been present at all this, how would you then have felt these words, "As my father hath sent me, so send I you?"

50. What sentiments of piety, what magnificence of spirit, what exalted holiness, would you have expected of those, who were called to succeed so great a master in so great a work? Could you think they could be fit for this office, unless they had *renounc'd* and *sacrificed* every thing for the sake of it? Could you think that any care but that of the church of God was proper for them? Would you not own that the conversion of sinners to God, ought to have been their only labour and pains? That they were to seek for no other happiness in this world, than such as their Lord and master had done, but consider themselves as called from the common affairs, ease and pleasures of life, to be in Christ's stead towards the rest of mankind, to conduct them safely to eternal happiness? Now when we consider the apostles in this light, as being the first that were entrusted with the *care of souls* from Christ himself, we can see no degree of zeal, no height of piety, no compassion for sinners, no concern for the honour or God, no contempt of suffering, no disregard of worldly interest, no watchings or mortifications, no fervours of devotion, to which we of the clergy are not equally obliged. For the salvation of mankind

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is ſtill the ſame glorious, and neceſſary work that it was in their days; is ſtill to be carry'd on by the ſame means, and is now in the hands of the clergy as it was then in theirs. If it was their happineſs and glory to be faithful to him that called them, to forget the little intereſts of fleſh and blood, and have nothing at heart, but the advancement of God's kingdom, we ſhall fail both of happineſs and glory if we ſeek it any other way. If an apoſtle conſidering the weight of reconciling ſouls unto God, is forced to cry out, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* Shall we think any care but that which is the greateſt, will make us ſtand uncondemned before God?

51. It is a fatal deception to imagine, that the life of a miniſter of God is ever to be a life of eaſe and worldly repoſe. For tho' the temporal ſword be not always drawn againſt them, nor they forced to flee from one city to another, yet the world, the fleſh and the devil, are never ſo difficult to be reſiſted, as in temporal proſperity; nor have the miniſters of Chriſt ever more occaſion to put on all their armour, than when the world is given up to eaſe, and peace, and plenty. Swarms of vices ſteal in upon us in theſe ſeaſons; the ſpirit and life of religion is in danger of being loſt, and the ſalvation of ſouls is made more difficult, than in the moſt perilous times. And how is ſuch a ſtate of temptation to be reſiſted, ſuch a torrent of vice to be ſuppreſs'd, but by the clergy's ſhewing themſelves *viſible* and *notorious* examples of all the contrary virtues? When mankind are wallowing in debauchery, wantoning in pleaſures, and given up to vanity and luxury in all ſhapes, it is then the duty of the faithful miniſter, by his being crucify'd to the world, to proclaim himſelf a meſſenger of a crucify'd Saviour, and to make his own ſelf-denying, mortify'd, and heavenly life, a plain, open, and conſtant reproof of all vain indulgences.

But to proceed. "To what a height of fanatick madneſs in doctrine as well as practice, ſays the doctor, are ſome advanced, who ſet out at firſt with

an appearance of more than ordinary ſanctity only?" Is not this calling upon the clergy to beware, how they admit theſe beginnings of a more than ordinary ſanctity of life, either in themſelves, or thoſe committed to their care? Is it not plainly telling them, that they muſt ſtick *cloſely* and *ſteadily* to ſuch ſanctity of practice, as may be called *ordinary*, or elſe they will be in fanatick madneſs? Nay, it is no force put upon his words, to ſuppoſe, *a more than ordinary ſanctity in practice only*, is mark'd out as the genuine, natural cauſe of *fanatick madneſs*, and therefore the cauſe is equally condemn'd with the effect. Had he meant that his reader ſhould not have the ſame diſlike of the one, as of the other, would he not have put in a word in favour of a *more than ordinary* ſanctity of life? Would he not have ſaid, that he did not intend to *blame that*, or at leaſt not *ſo much* as the other? But not a word of this. A more than ordinary ſanctity in *practice only*, and fanatick *madneſs* are conſider'd as cauſe and effect, and left in the ſame ſtate of condemnation, to be equally guarded againſt, and avoided, by the reader.

52. I can't help here addreſſing myſelf with great affection to all my younger brethren of the clergy. According to the courſe of nature, you are likely to have the care of the church wholly upon your hands in a ſhort time; and therefore it is chiefly from you that the reſtoration of true piety is to be expected in this nation. I beſeech you, therefore, for your own ſakes, for the goſpel's ſake, for the ſake of mankind, to devote yourſelves wholly to the love and ſervice of God. As you are yet but beginners in this great office, you have in your power to make your lives the greateſt happineſs, both to yourſelves and the whole nation. You are enter'd into *holy orders* in degenerate times, where trade and traffick have ſeized upon all holy things; and it will be eaſy for you without fear to ſwim along with the corrupt ſtream, and to look upon him as an enemy or enthuſiaſt, that would ſave you from being loſt in it. But think my dear brethren, think in time what remorſe you are treaſur-

treaſuring up for yourſelves, if you live to look back upon a looſe, negligent, worldly life, ſpent among thoſe whoſe blood will be required at your hands. Think on the other hand, how bleſſedly your employment will end, if by your voices, your lives, and labours, you put a ſtop to the overflowings of iniquity, reſtore the ſpirit of the primitive clergy, and make all your flock bleſs, and praiſe God, for having ſent you among them. Lay this down as an infallible principle, that *an entire, abſolute renunciation* of all worldly intereſt, is the only poſſible foundation of that virtue which your ſtation requires. Without this all attempts after an exemplary piety are in vain. If you want any thing from the world by way of figure and exaltation, you ſhut the power of your Redeemer out of your own ſouls, and inſtead of converting, you corrupt the hearts of thoſe that are about you. Deteſt therefore with the utmoſt abhorrence, all deſires of making your fortunes, either by preferments or rich marriages, and let it be your only ambition to ſtand at the top of every virtue, as viſible guides and patterns to all that aſpire after the perfection of holineſs. Conſider yourſelves merely as the meſſengers of God, that are ſolely ſent into the world, to bring the world to God.

53. I don't call you from a ſober uſe of human learning, but I would fain perſuade you to think nothing worthy of your notice in books and ſtudy, but that which applies to the amendment of the heart, which makes you more holy, more divine, more heavenly, than you would be without it. You want nothing, but to have the corruption of your natural birth removed, to have the nature, life, and ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt deriv'd into you. As this is all you want, ſo let this be all that you ſeek from books, ſtudy, or men. This is the only certain way to become eminent divines, inſtructed to the kingdom of heaven. And above all, let me tell you that the book of all books is your own heart, in which are written and engraven the deepeſt leſſons of divine inſtruction. Learn therefore to be deeply attentive

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to the preſence of God in your heart, who is always ſpeaking, always inſtructing, always illuminating that heart that is attentive to him: and be aſſured of this, that ſo much as you have of inward attention to God, of love and adherence to his holy light and ſpirit, ſo much as you have of real, unaffected humility and meekneſs; ſo much as you are dead to your own will, ſo much as you have of purity of heart; ſo much and no more, nor any further, do you ſee and know the truths of God. Theſe virtues are the only eyes and ears and ſenſes, by which you will underſtand every thing in ſcripture, in that manner in which God would have it underſtood, both for your own good, and the good of other people.

54. It was owing to this purity of heart, and attendance upon God, that an ancient widow named *Anna*, knew him to be the true Meſſiah, whom the rulers, chief prieſts, and doctors of the law, condemned as an impoſtor. Had they, inſtead of their adherence to critical knowledge and rabbinical learning, been devoted to God in ſuch purity of heart as ſhe was, they had known as much of the kingdom of God, as ſhe did. Place therefore all your hope, all your learned help and ſkill, in the ardent love and practice of *theſe virtues*. And then, you will be able miniſters, holy prieſts, and meſſengers of God; your cleanſed hearts, like ſo many purify'd mirrors, will be always penetrated, always illuminated by the rays of divine light, and you will no more need the criticks, to tell you what God ſpeaks to you in the ſcriptures. But of all men in the world, the critical dealers in words and particles, know the leaſt of them, and make the vaineſt attempts to underſtand them.

Scripture conſidered as a doctrine of *life*, *faith* and *ſalvation* in Jeſus Chriſt, is a ſealed or unſealed, an open or ſhut up book to every heart, in the ſame proportion as it ſtands turn'd to the world, or turn'd to God. Nothing underſtands God, but the ſpirit of God; nothing brings the ſpirit of God into any mind but the renouncing all for it, the turning wholly

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unto it, and the depending wholly upon it. Human learning is by no means to be rejected from religion, for it is of the ſame uſe, and affords the ſame aſſiſtance to religion, that the *alphabet*, *writing* and *printing* does. But if it is raiſed from this kind and degree of aſſiſtance, if it is conſidered as a key, or the key to the myſteries of our redemption, inſtead of opening to us the kingdom of God, it locks us up in our own darkneſs. God is an all ſpeaking, *all working*, *all illuminating* eſſence, poſſeſſing the depth of every creature according to its nature; and when we turn from all impediments, this divine eſſence becomes as certainly the true light of our minds here, as it will be hereafter. This is not enthuſiaſm, but the words of truth and ſoberneſs; and it is the running away from this enthuſiaſm, that has made ſo many great ſcholars as uſeleſs to the church as tinkling cymbals, and Chriſtendom a mere Babel of learned confuſion.

SOME

SOME

ANIMADVERSIONS

UPON

Dr. *Trap*'s late REPLY.

SOME

ANIMADVERSIONS, &c.

HAD I the ſpirit of an *adverſary*, or were inclined to find entertainment for the *ſatirical reader*, it would not be eaſy for me to overlook the opportunity which Dr. *Trap*'s reply has put into my hands; but as I don't want to leſſen any appearance of ability which the doctor has ſhewn on this occaſion; ſo whatever *perſonally* concerns him, either as a *writer*, a *ſcholar*, a *diſputant*, a *divine* or a *Chriſtian*, ſhall have no reflection from me; and tho' by this means, ſome ſort of readers may be leſs pleaſed, yet, the more Chriſtian reader will be glad to find, that thus I muſt leave *two thirds* of his reply untouch'd; and as I neither have, nor (by the grace of God) ever will have any *perſonal contention* with any man whatever, ſo all the *triumph* which the doctor has gained over me by that flow of wrath and contempt which he has let looſe upon me, I ſhall leave him quietly to enjoy.

It would be no pleaſure to me, nor benefit to the world, to diſcover that *malignity* of *ſpirit*, that *undiſtinguiſhing head*, that *diabolical calumny*, that *ſhameful ignorance*, that *indecent ſufficiency*, that *unbecoming preſumption*, that *naſeous* dulneſs, that *ignorance* of *logic*, that *inſenſibility* of argument, that want of *grammar*, which he has ſo heartily laid to my charge; and if

he has any readers that thank him for this, I ſhall make no attempt to leſſen their number.

As I deſire nothing for myſelf, or the reader, but good *eyes*, and a good *heart*, ſeriouſly attentive to things uſeful, and always open to the light and influence of the Holy Spirit of God, ſo I ſhall endeavour to ſay nothing but what is ſuitable to ſuch a ſtate of mind, both in myſelf and the reader.

The thing of importance which I ſhall ſpeak to, ſhall be with regard to what I have ſaid to the clergy. The miſerable ſtate of religion, and the great corruption of manners, ſo inconteſtably apparent in this iſland, gave me a juſt occaſion to deſire all the clergy, from the higheſt to the loweſt in the order, to conſider their conduct, and ſee how free they were from the common corruption, and how juſtly every one could clear himſelf from having any ſhare in this general depravity of manners. I was not inſenſible that this was a dangerous attempt, that would expoſe me to the reſentment of not a few of my brethren: But as I wrote for no other end but to do as much good as I could to thoſe who were capable of it, ſo I had no care but how to ſpeak diſagreeable truths, in as inoffenſive a manner as I could; how I have ſucceeded in this, is left to the world to judge. And as it is but too apparent, that the root of all the evil, which but too much ſpreads itſelf through the whole body of the clergy, is owing to a worldly, trading ſpirit, too viſible from the top to the bottom of the order, ſo I pointed at it in the ſofteſt manner that I could, in the following words, grounded on a plain apoſtolical doctrine and practice.

St. *Paul*, I had obſerv'd, had ſaid, it was lawful for thoſe that preach the goſpel to live by the goſpel, and yet makes it matter of the greateſt comfort to himſelf that he had wholly abſtained from this *lawful thing*; and declares, it were better for him to die than that *this* rejoicing ſhould be taken from him. He appeals to his daily and nightly working with his own hands, that ſo he might preach the goſpel *freely*, and not be chargeable to thoſe that heard him.

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And this he ſaid he did, not for want of authority to do otherwiſe, but that he might make himſelf an enſample unto them to follow him. Here, I ſay, "What awakening inſtructions are here given to us of the *clergy*, in a practical matter of the greateſt moment? How ought every one to be frighted at the thoughts of deſiring or ſeeking a *ſecond living*, or of rejoicing at great pay where there is but little duty, when the apoſtle's rejoicing conſiſted in this, that he had paſſed through all the fatigues and perils of preaching the goſpel without any pay at all? How cautious, nay, how fearful ought we to be, of going ſo far as the ſecular laws permit, when the apoſtle thought it more deſirable to loſe his life, than to go ſo far as the very law of the goſpel would have ſuffered him?

"It is looked upon as lawful to get ſeveral preferments, and to make a gain of the goſpel, by hiring others to do duty for us at a lower rate ——It is looked upon as lawful to quit a cure of ſouls of a ſmall income, for no other reaſon, but becauſe we can get another of a greater.——It is looked upon as lawful for a clergyman to take the revenues of the church, which he ſerves, to his *own uſe*, though he has more than a competency of his own, and much more than the apoſtle could get by his labour.—— It is looked upon as lawful for the clergy to live in ſtate and equipage, to buy purple and fine linen out of the revenues of the church.——It is looked upon as lawful for clergymen to enrich their families, to bring up their children in the faſhionable vanities, and corrupting methods of a worldly and expenſive life, by money got by preaching the goſpel of Chriſt. But ſuppoſing all this *lawful*, what comfort might we treaſure up to ourſelves, what honour might we bring to religion, what force might we give to the goſpel, what benefit ſhould we do to our neighbour, if we wholly abſtain'd from all theſe lawful things? Not by working day and night with our own hands, as the great apoſtle did, but by limiting our wants

and desires to the plain demands of nature, and a religious self-denial."

Now, there are but two possible ways of justly replying to this; first, either by shewing that these observations are falsely drawn from the apostle's doctrine and practice, that I have mistaken the spirit of St. *Paul*, and the genius of the gospel, that I am doing what the apostle would not do, was he here in person, and representing such things as corruptions, which the apostle would be glad to see flourishing in the church of Christ: Or, secondly, that tho' these things are condemnable from the apostle's doctrine and practice, yet they are not chargeable upon the temper and practice of the clergy of this land. But, tho' not a word to the purpose could possibly be said, unless by one of these two ways, yet the doctor shuts his eyes to both of them, and then pronounces sentence upon me, "That a Quaker, or Infidel, could not well have reflected with more virulency upon the clergy of our church, than I have done in these expressions."

Must I then suppose, that the doctor in his sermons never mentions any failings that concern his auditors? If he does, I desire to know, how he clears himself from virulently reflecting upon them? The Quakers, and Infidels, are ready enough, and able enough to shew, that most congregations of Christians are sadly fallen from the religion of the gospel. But does the doctor forbear this charge, is he asham'd to call his flock to a more Christian life, or afraid to remind them of their departure from the gospel, lest he should seem to join with Quakers and Infidels? Or, how can the doctor be thought to have any *true love*, or *just esteem* for those Christians, whom he is so often reminding of the corruption of their manners, so contrary to the religion of Jesus Christ? Now, if the doctor knows how to untie this knot, and to extricate himself from the charge of virulent reflecting upon his parishioners, as Quakers and Infidels do, then he has dissolved his charge against me into a mere nothing.

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If it was a thing required of me, I know no more how to raiſe in myſelf the leaſt ſpark of ill-will towards the clergy, as ſuch, than I know how to work myſelf up into a hatred of the light of the ſun. It is as natural to me, to wiſh them all their perfection, as to wiſh peace and happineſs to myſelf here and hereafter; and when I point at any failings in their conduct, it is only with ſuch a ſpirit as I would pluck a brother out of the fire.

In that part of my anſwer, which is addreſſed to the younger clergy, I ſaid, "Lay this down for an infallible principle; that an entire, abſolute renunciation of all worldly intereſt, is the only poſſible foundation of that exalted virtue, which your ſtation requires; without this, all attempts after an exemplary piety are vain: (*and then, by way of limitation and explication of this, it thus immediately follows:*) If you want any thing from the world by way of *figure* and *exaltation*, you ſhut the power of your Redeemer out of your own ſouls, and inſtead of converting, you corrupt the hearts of thoſe that are about you. Deteſt therefore, with the *utmoſt abhorrence*, all deſires of making your fortunes, either by *perferments*, or *rich marriages*, and let it be your only ambition, to ſtand at the top of every virtue, as viſible guides and patterns to all that aſpire after the perfection of holineſs," *p.* 61.

Now, one would imagine there was no part of the Chriſtian world, however corrupted, where this doctrine would not be admitted at leaſt in theory; or, that the goſpel of Chriſt ſhould be thought to be reproached, where ſuch advice as this was given to young divines: And yet it is of this very advice, that Dr. *Trap* ſays, "he *hopes they* will have more *grace* and ſenſe *than to follow it:* That it is *falſe doctrine, tending to the reproach and ſcandal of the Chriſtian religion*, p. 87."

Is it then come to this, that unleſs young divines chuſe to ſerve mammon as well as God, their profeſſion is a renouncing of grace and ſenſe, and a reproach to religion? And muſt they that pretend to

act in Christ's name, as successors in his office, take care that they renounce not the politics of the kingdom of this world? For my part, I thought it as consistent with the honour of the gospel, to give this advice to suppress all worldly views, as to resist the temptations of the devil.

Had *Martin Luther*, when he gave his reasons for withdrawing from the *Pope*, been able to have added this; that the advice here given, had been formally condemned by the *Pope* in a great council, the defenders of that church would have found it as hard to have made such a decree consistent with the gospel, as the selling of indulgencies: and it may well be supposed, that no Protestant writer, when setting forth the marks of antichrist, in that church, would have forgot to have made this condemnation to be one of them.

For who can shew it to be so contrary to the whole spirit of the gospel, to call in the *assistance* of the saints, or to deny the cup to the laity, who can shew this to put so entire a stop to salvation by the gospel, as to condemn this *advice* to young divines, as a reproach to Christianity? For all the ends of the gospel may be pursued, and men may arise out of the corruption of their nature, notwithstanding these two mistakes: but to condemn it as an error inconsistent with grace and sense, a reproach to Christianity, for young divines to renounce worldly views, and devote themselves wholly to God, is striking at the whole root of all holiness, and a denial of the whole spirit of the gospel.

Our church requires all its candidates for holy orders, to make profession of their being moved and called by the Holy Ghost to enter into the service of the church: this, I should think, is proof enough, that the spirit of this world ought not to be alive in them, when they make this profession; and yet, if any young persons should come to be ordain'd, thus dead to all worldly views, thus wholly devoted to God, they ought according to the doctor, to be rejected by the bishop, as being led by a spirit that has

has loſt all *grace* and *ſenſe*, and is a *reproach* to the Chriſtian religion.

It is needleſs to quote particular texts of ſcripture, teaching the ſame that I have here taught; the whole nature of our redemption is a ſtanding proof of the ſame thing; for we want to be redeemed for no other reaſon, but becauſe we are born children of this world, and have by nature only the life, ſpirit and temper of this world in us: this is our fall, our curſe, our ſeparation from God; and therefore we can have no redemption, but by a renunciation of all the workings of the life of this world in us, by a total dying to, and denying ourſelves; becauſe all that we are, as to our ſtate, ſpirit and life in this world, is a life that carries us from God, a life that ſhould not have been in us; 'tis a life begun by the fall, a life of ſin and corruption, which cannot enter into heaven. Indeed the life that we have in this world, from *Adam*, is not to be *naturally* deſtroyed, nor are the neceſſaries and conveniencies of life to be rejected, nor is any one to renounce his ſhare in the employments that are uſeful to ſocial life: the renunciation of this world reaches no farther than the renouncing the ſpirit, and inclinations of it. We may ſtand in our ſtations, when we ſtand in them as the ſervants of God, as citizens of the new *Jeruſalem*, who have amongſt earthly things, our converſation in heaven: we may keep our poſſeſſions, when we poſſeſs them as the things of God, and uſe them not as nature, but as the ſpirit directs us; when we do thus, we have the poverty of ſpirit, which the goſpel requires, and come up to the ſenſe of that command given to the young man, *to ſell all that he had, and give to the poor.*

But now, if our natural life is a corrupt, beſtial, diabolical life brought forth by the fall, if we want to be born again of the Holy Spirit, becauſe our natural birth is according to the ſpirit of this world; if nothing of the beaſt, or the devil, no kind or degree of envy, pride and vanity can enter into the kingdom of God, then it is plain, that all religion which leaves this nature unrenounced,

ed, which lets pride, wrath, and vanity ſubſiſt in us, which brings us to our graves in the ſame nature in which we were born, is not the religion that can ſave us. If this nature in all its moſt ſecret workings is not renounced, it matters not what we are, or what we have been doing, it ſignifies little in what chair we have ſat, whether in *Italy*, or *England*, how long we have been preachers, how many hereticks and ſchiſmaticks we have oppoſed, or how many books we have written in defence of orthodoxy; it is as vain to appeal to this, as to our having preached and *propheſy'd* in the name of Chriſt: for if this nature is allowed to live in us, all our good works have been govern'd by it, they are animated with pride, and only ſerve to gratify our own natural paſſions. When therefore the doctor calls upon young divines to have *more grace* and *ſenſe* than to be driven from thoughts of advancing themſelves by *preferments and rich marriages*, he would do well to conſider, how little ſhort this is of calling them to break their very baptiſmal vow, of *renouncing the pomps and vanities of the world*. And if young candidates for holy orders, looking only at their baptiſmal vow, ſhould be led into this degree of ſelf-denial and detachment from the world, does the doctor think, that the apoſtles, from whom this baptiſmal vow is deſcended, will riſe up in the day of judgment, and condemn ſuch abuſe of it? Does he think, that there are any departed ſaints that will join with him in ſaying, ſuch a ſpirit is a *reproach* to the goſpel? What more favourable diſpoſition could the adverſary of mankind wiſh to ſee, either in young or old divines, than a wanting and deſiring to have figure in the world, either by preferments or rich marriages? Would he find it difficult to enter into thoſe hearts, where the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life has thus entered? Or would he look upon ſuch as but half fitted for him, in compariſon of thoſe who entered into holy orders in a ſpirit of ſelf-denial, and renunciation of the pomps and vanities of the world?

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John the *Baptiſt* was but the preparer of the way for evangelical purity of life; but does the doctor think that if the *Baptiſt* was now to come amongſt us, he would look at things as the doctor does, that he would ſee ſuch perfections and ſuch corruptions, ſuch orthodoxy and ſuch enthuſiaſm as the doctor ſees; that this *burning and ſhining light* would ſee no *generation of vipers* but where the doctor ſees them; that he would preach no where but in churches; that he would ſpare no clergy, nor any church, but that which is eſtabliſhed in this iſland; that he would complain of the hardſhips of our clergy, and the ſuffering ſpirit which they are forced to practiſe, that he would plead for a prieſtly liberty of coveting preferments and rich marriages, that he would recommend the doctor's diſcourſe of the *folly, ſin, and danger of being righteous over-much*, as the true fruits of that ſpirit which firſt preach'd the goſpel? He that can believe this, muſt believe that the Baptiſt was come to confeſs the errors of his firſt appearance in the world.

I ſhall therefore proceed to tell young divines, that a total renunciation of the ſpirit, and inclinations of this life, is the one thing neceſſary to conſecrate them to their holy office; that as ſure as the church of Chriſt is not a kingdom of this world, as ſure as Jeſus Chriſt came to deliver us from this evil world, as ſure as he requires us to be born again, and to forſake all and follow him, ſo ſure is it that no one has the call of the Holy Spirit to the miniſtry, nor the leaſt ground of hoping to be led and governed by it in his miniſtry, till he at leaſt prays, deſires, and heartily endeavours to have all that diſregard of worldly proſperity, figure, and diſtinction, which the ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt, the maxims of the goſpel, and the practice of the apoſtles ſet before him. Till this renunciation of the world is made, we cannot enter into the miniſtry at its *own door*, but like thieves and robbers, climb over its walls; and then it will be no wonder if we do no more good to the church than thieves do the houſe they break open and plun-

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der. If a young miniſter wants to act the part of a fine gentleman, to go on in the common ſpirit of the world, to cover a ſecular ſpirit with an eccleſiaſtick garb, and make his fortune in the church, he muſt be told that it is much ſafer to be a *publican* and a *ſinner*, than to be a *trader* in ſpiritual things; that he who with unſanctify'd hands attends at the altar, is farther from the kingdom of God, than a *publican*.

Covetouſneſs is idolatry; it is a heatheniſh, antichriſtian vice, tho' only trafficking in wordly matters; but when it takes poſſeſſion of the altar, and makes a trade of the myſteries of ſalvation, it has a blackneſs of vice which much exceeds that of the worldly miſer. The ſpirit of an eccleſiaſtick ſhould be the ſpirit of heaven, knowing nothing of this world, but how to eſcape its ſnares and temptations, burning in the love of God, and holding out light to all that aſpire after every perfection of the Chriſtian life.

'Tis too commonly thought, that when a young ſtudent has taken his degree, and ſhewn ſome ſigns of a genius for learning, he is well prepared to enter into the ſervice of the church. But alas! all the accompliſhments of human learning are but the ornaments of the *old man*, which leave the ſoul in its ſlavery to ſin, full of all the diſorders and corruptions of the fallen nature. If it were not thus, how could the errors of all churches have the greateſt ſcholars for their champions? All the learned catholick world is amazed at the blindneſs, the perverſeneſs, the weakneſs, the ſophiſtry, the unfairneſs of *proteſtant critics*. All the proteſtant world is in the ſame degree of wonder at the ſame diſorders in *catholic diſputants*. Is not this a demonſtration of the nature, power, and place of human learning? Of its great uſefulneſs to religion? Does not this enough ſhew, that it is the offſpring of the old man, and his nature and qualities, dwells in him, and is govern'd by him? Is not this a demonſtration, that the greateſt degrees of hiſtorical, verbal, critical knowledge are no real hindrance of ſpiritual blindneſs? That

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human learning is as different from divine light as heaven is from earth; and that conſidered in itſelf, it leaves us in our ſlavery to blind and corrupt paſſions? Now nothing can deliver a man from this ſtate, but the ſpirit of God derived into his ſoul, which alone can bring forth a new man created in Chriſt Jeſus. Nothing can make way for this new birth, but a total dying to all that we are by our natural birth. 'Tis only *this ſeparation* from things below, that can make us partakers of the truth and light that comes from above. Take away all ſelfiſhneſs from the papiſt and the proteſtant, let them be dead to the workings of the ſpirit, and they will be as fully agreed about goſpel truths, as they are in the form of a ſquare or a circle. For nothing ſtands in the way of divine truth, or hinders its full entrance into us, but this ſelfiſhneſs, which adheres to every one who does not make it his firſt maxim, prayer, and endeavour to die to, and deny himſelf in all the tempers and inclinations of our fallen nature. This ſelf-denial is the continual doctrine of our Lord; it is by him made the beginning of all converſion to God, and he that cannot, or will not begin there, can make no beginning of that life, to which he is called in Chriſt Jeſus: Therefore he that offers himſelf for holy orders, without this ſpirit of delf denial, is a miſerable intruder; he only hardens and fixes himſelf in the corruptions of his own nature, and inſtead of becoming an inſtrument of ſaving others, his very office makes his own ſalvation more dangerous.

I doubt not but ſome will here charge me with pleading for poverty in the miniſtry, and with enmity to that maintenance which they have both from the law and the goſpel. But this is ſo far from being true, that I wiſh every good miniſter, whom the ſpirit of God has called to this office, and governs in it, had much more of this world's goods than are needful for his own ſubſiſtence; becauſe it is certain, that ſuch a one's money would all be put into the poor's bag, and he would as gladly adminiſter

niſter to their temporal as to their ſpiritual neceſſities. I write againſt nothing but *avarice*, *pride*, and *ambition*, and the making the proviſions of the church *ſubſervient* to theſe tempers. A proviſion ariſing from the goſpel, is *conſecrated* by the goſpel, and is profaned by being touch'd and uſed by a worldly ſpirit. And he who turns this proviſion of the goſpel into a gratification of worldly paſſions, ſins againſt the goſpel more than he that pays his tithes with reluctance.

I can eaſily believe, there are clergy in this land, who labour in the Goſpel, without having a ſufficient ſubſiſtence from it; but may not much of this evil be charged upon *pluralities*, *commendams*, and ſuch like ſpiritual trading? If the inferior clergy had their labours only undervalued by the laity, they would be in a much better condition than they are.

When it is complained by what ſhameful *qualifications*, empty *titles*, and unworthy pretences, numbers of perſons get loaded and dignified with variety of preferments; it is anſwered, that if preferments might not be thus crowded together, diſtinguiſhed abilities and eminent labours for the ſervice of religion, muſt go unrewarded.

As this anſwer is not fetch'd from the goſpel, or the primitive church, ſo it is as little ſupported by reaſon. For if this eminent labour is truly pious labour, what ſtate of life can ſo little want to be rewarded? How can imagination itſelf place a man more *above* the thoughts and deſires of worldly advancement? If ſuch a one is full of the ſpirit of the goſpel, if his labours have been like thoſe of an apoſtle, muſt he not like an apoſtle, be *dead* to the world? Can ſuch a one look upon his labour as a *hardſhip*, becauſe it has left him as low, and as far from the *pomp* of the world as it found him? Can he repine becauſe the goſpel has not proved a good *worldly bargain* to him? If the ſpirit of God has begun, and directed all his labours, animated all his ſtudies and deſigns, can ſuch a one think it hard, that he has

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not by ſuch labours purchaſed to himſelf a ſhare in the ſtate and pride of life?

If by a *great divine*, is only meant a perſon well ſkill'd in *critical contention*, who can artfully defend a ſet of notions, amongſt which he happened to be born and bred, ſuch a divine, I own, may be very *impatient*, and *much cool'd* in his zeal, unleſs he finds himſelf well rewarded; but if an eminent divine is to be underſtood in a ſenſe ſuitable to the goſpel, he is that *particular perſon* that muſt needs have the greateſt contempt and diſlike of every thing, that has but the appearance of the pomp and vanity of this world in it. If therefore it was urged, that this conjunction of preferments and dignifying rewards was neceſſary to bring *ambitious ſcholars* into the church, or to keep them in it, there would be ſome ſenſe, tho' no goſpel in the pretence; but to talk of them as neceſſary to be the rewards of eminent piety and Apoſtolic labour, is as abſurd, as to ſay, that thoſe who have truly put on Chriſt, who ſtand in the higheſt degree of a renewed nature, who beſt know and feel the bleſſing of a mortify'd, heavenly ſpirit, have leſs reaſon to be *content with food and raiment*, than thoſe who ſtand in a lower degree of the Chriſtian life; 'tis ſaying, that a *biſhop*, becauſe he has moſt of the ſpirit and office of an apoſtle may well deſire more of the *pride* and *figure* of this world, than the lower clergy, who have leſs of the Apoſtolic ſpirit and perfection in them.

To want to ſtand in ſome degree of worldly figure, is the ſtate of a *babe* in the Chriſtian life, and therefore can no way become thoſe, who are to lead others to fulneſs of ſtature in Chriſt Jeſus.

A *great divine* is but a *cant* expreſſion, unleſs it ſignifies a man *greatly advanced* in the divine life, whoſe own experience and example is a demonſtration of the *reality* of all the graces of the goſpel. No divine has any more of the goſpel in him, than that which proves itſelf by the ſpirit and form of his life: if therefore poverty of ſpirit, a diſregard of worldly figure, a total ſelf-denial is any part of the goſpel, an

eminent divine, can have no wiſh with regard to the figure, pride and pomp of life, but to be placed out of every appearance of it: and if the higheſt in divine knowledge are not the foremoſt in poverty of ſpirit, and the outward humility of Chriſt and his apoſtles; if they deſire to have a dignity of worldly figure, to have reſpect by any other means than by a dive Evangelical ſpirit and converſation, and are not content with all the contempt that ſuch a life can expoſe them to, they may be *great ſcholars*, but they are *little divines*, and are wanting in that which is the chief part of the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt.

The next thing I ſaid to the young clergy, was this; "Conſider yourſelves *merely* as the meſſengers "of God, that are ſent into the world *ſolely* on his er- "rand; and think it happineſs enough that you are "called to the ſame buſineſs for which the ſon of "God was born into the world," *p.* 81.

Now, I thought what I have ſaid, was as unexceptionable, as unfit to be condemn'd by a profeſſor of Chriſtian theology, as if I had only recommended the loving of God with all our heart and ſoul, and mind and ſtrength; and that if any clergyman diſlik'd it, he would be forced to keep his diſlike to himſelf: but the doctor is very open in his indignation at it; the ſame anſwer, he ſays, is to be given here, as before, *viz. that it is falſe doctrine, tending to the ſcandal and reproach* of the Chriſtian religion.

Our bleſſed Lord, when he ſent the firſt preachers of the goſpel into the world, ſaid unto them, *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you* ——*go ye and teach all nations*—— and *lo I am with you to the end of the world.* Now let it be ſuppoſed, that theſe firſt preachers of the goſpel fully believed, that from the time of their appointment to this high office, they *were to conſider themſelves merely as the meſſengers of God, ſent into the world ſolely on his errand*, and that *it was happineſs enough for them to be called to that buſineſs*, for which the ſon of God was *born into the world*; if they had this belief, what follows? Why, according to the doctor, that they ſet out from the very firſt in one of the greateſt

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errors, had miſtaken the nature and intent of their miſſion, and had gone into the world upon a principle that *was falſe* in itſelf, and *ſcandalous* and *reproachful* to the Chriſtian religion.

But if this belief is not to be condemn'd in the firſt clergy, I deſire to know why thoſe who claim their ſucceſſion from the firſt, and expect the preſence of Chriſt in and with their miniſtry, are not to be called upon to be of the ſame ſpirit and belief with them, or how it can be a ſcandal to the goſpel, for the modern clergy to be as wholly devoted to the ſervice of God, as the apoſtles were.

The doctor ſets it out as an extraordinary preſumption in *ſuch a man* as I am, to pretend to give advice to young divines, when it is ſo ſufficiently done already by the *offices of our church, the charges, inſtructions and exhortations of our biſhops at their viſitation, and ſo many excellent ordination and viſitation ſermons*, p. 87. Now, granting the plenty and excellency of all theſe, yet I have ſome hope, my preſumption may be found to be only like that of the *poor widow*, who after ſo many rich oblations of great people, preſumed to put her little mite into the treaſury. And if it be true, that the things ſuggeſted by me, are only ſuch as have been already ſet forth by ſo many great biſhops and excellent preachers, how will the doctor come off for condemning it, as falſe doctrine, ſcandalous, and reproachful to the Chriſtian religion?

Dr. *Trap* gives a reaſon for his condemning this advice, which is thus expreſſed: "It is, ſays he, falſe to ſay, that clergymen ought to mind nothing, in any degree, but their profeſſion and duty, as clergymen; they are huſbands, parents, men, as well as clergymen, and muſt in ſome meaſure be concerned in the affairs of the world, p. 88."

Part of this I own to be very true, *viz.* that they are men, and have the wants of human nature which muſt be ſupplied; and for proof of this, the doctor might have appealed to St. *Paul*, who, tho' miraculouſly called to be an apoſtle, and ſeparated from the

world to be merely a meſſenger and apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt; yet, after this high apoſtleſhip, worked at his trade, and often ſpent part of the day and the night in making tents: therefore, if all thoſe whom I have exhorted to conſider themſelves as ſet apart for the ſole ſervice of God, ſhould ſhew ſuch a degree of worldly care as St. *Paul* did, when he worked at his trade, they might yet juſtly be ſaid to act ſuitably to their ſtation, as the miniſters of God, that are wholly devoted to his ſervice; for who can ſay that St. *Paul* departed from his character, as a miniſter of God, when he laboured with his own hands, that he might glorioufly and freely preach the goſpel? For it was for the ſake of the goſpel, to promote and recommend the goſpel, to make his preaching the more ſucceſsful; it was to ſhew that he had fully renounced the world, and deſired nothing from it, but for the glory of God. And thus have all the miniſters of the goſpel an example in St. *Paul*, how they may make their care of a livelihood a part of their ſervice to God.

But when the doctor ſays, that clergymen are huſbands and parents, I muſt object a little; becauſe no ſcripture, or antiquity ſhews me, that theſe characters *muſt* belong to a preacher of the goſpel; and therefore, when a clergyman excuſes himſelf from any heights of the miniſterial ſervice, by ſaying, *he has marry'd a wife* and *therefore cannot come* up to them; it ſeems to be no better an excuſe, than if he had ſaid, *he had hired a farm*, or *bought five yoke of oxen*.

I know very well, that the *reformation* has allowed prieſts and biſhops not only to look out for wives, bu' to have as many as they pleaſe, one after another: But this is only to be conſidered as a bare allowance, and perhaps granted upon ſuch a motive, as *Moſes* of old made one to the *Jews*, for *the hardneſs of their hearts*, tho' *from the beginning it was not ſo*; and therefore when elogiums are ſometimes made from the pulpit on this matter, I think they had better have been ſpared; an allowance granted to weakneſs

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is but an indifferent ſubject to be made a matter of glory.

The doctor ſhould alſo have obſerv'd, that my addreſs was made to the young clergy, and ſuch as are only upon entering into holy orders, nine in ten of whom may be ſuppoſed to be neither huſbands nor fathers. He ſhould alſo have remember'd that our univerſities are full of clergy who are obliged to live unmarried, that they may have proper leiſure and freedom to attend their ſtudies without impediment from worldly cares. And therefore if I pointed at ſuch a dedication of the clergy to the ſervice of God, as *huſbands* and *fathers* cannot enter into, yet the matter is not blameable, becauſe there are ſo many that have not yet entered into this ſtate, but are at liberty to devote themſelves wholly to the ſervice of the goſpel. And therefore if to ſuch as theſe, I can ſo repreſent the weight, the duties, the heavenly nature of the prieſthood, as to prevent or extinguiſh in them all thoughts and deſires of being thus married to the world, what hurt have I done them, or the married clergy, or the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt?

Celibacy, when entered into from a principle of divine love, from a heart burning with the deſire of living wholly to God, is a ſtate that gives wings to all our endeavours, and fits the ſoul for the higheſt growth of every virtue: And if he that is conſecrated to the ſervice of the altar, feels not ſuch an aſcent of his ſoul towards heaven, as to have no wiſh, but that his *whole body*, *ſoul*, and *ſpirit*, may be preſented to God in its utmoſt degree of purity, he has his lamp much leſs kindled, than many of the laity, both men and women have had, in all ages of the church. Cuſtom has too great a power over our judgments, and reconciles us to any thing; but if a a Chriſtian, who lived when Chriſtianity was in its glory, when the firſt apologiſts for it, appealed to the numbers of both ſexes, devoted to a ſingle life, as an invincible proof of the power and divinity of the goſpel; if a Chriſtian of thoſe days was now to come into the world, he would be more ſhocked at reve-

rend doctors making love to women, than at seeing a monk in his cell, kissing a wooden crucifix.

The knowledge and love of the Virgin-state began with Christianity, when the nature of our corruption, and the nature of our redemption were so fully discovered by the gospel. Then it was, that a new degree of heavenly love was kindled in the human nature, and brought forth a state of life that had not been desired, till the son of the virgin came into the world. *John* the *Baptist* was the beginner of the gospel dispensation; this *burning and shining light* was in his person, the figure of *Judaism* ending in Christianity. In his outward state he was a *Jew*, in his inward spirit and character he belonged to the gospel. He came out of the wilderness burning and shining, to preach the kingdom of heaven *at hand*. This may shew us that heat and light from above, kindled in a state of great self-denial, are necessary to make us able ministers of the gospel; and that if we pretend to the ministry without these qualifications, and come only burning and shining with the spirit of this world, we are as well fitted to hinder, as the Baptist was to prepare the way to the kingdom of heaven. Look at this great saint, all ye that desire to preach the gospel. He came forth in the highest degrees of mortification and chastity of life. But why did he so come? It was to shew the world that these virtues must form the spirit of every preacher of the gospel. His character does not call you to a wilderness beyond *Jordan*, or to be cloathed with Camels hair. Such circumstances are particular to himself; but it calls you to his inward spirit of self-denial, to his death to the world, and all carnal love, if you would not only preach, but prove the perfection of the gospel: For if the *Baptist* was to be thus dead to the flesh and the world, that he might preach thus much, *the kingdom of heaven is at hand*; can less self-denial be required of those, who are to preach that which is much more, namely, that *the kingdom of heaven is come?*

Now if this holy *Baptist*, when he had preach'd awhile upon penitence, and the kingdom of heaven

at hand, had made an offering of his heart to ſome fine *young lady of great accompliſhments*, had not this put an end to all that was burning and ſhining in his character? And if thoſe clergy who date their miſſion from Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, ſent by him as he was by his father, to ſtand as his repreſentatives, applying the means and myſteries of ſalvation to all that deſire to be *born again*, if they, whether they be vicars, rectors, arch-deacons, deans, or biſhops, ſhould look upon their office to be as ſacred, and their ſtation as high in the kingdom of God, as the *Baptiſt*'s was; if they ſhould look upon love-addreſſes to the ſex, as unbecoming, as foreign, to their character, as to the *Baptiſt*'s, could any one ſay, that they took too much upon them, or paid too great a reverence to the holineſs of the prieſtood, which they derived from the very perſon and office of Jeſus Chriſt?

Our bleſſed Lord improved upon theſe two articles of mortification and chaſtity, and ſets them before every preacher of the goſpel in a yet fuller light. It is needleſs to ſhew how much he ſpeaks of the nature and neceſſity of a total ſelf-denial; but what he ſays of the virgin-life, as to be choſen by thoſe who are able to chuſe it, for the kingdom of heaven's ſake, *Matt.* xix. 12. is more than a volume of human eloquence in praiſe of it. What wonder is it, if after this, great numbers both of men and women were found in the firſt ages of the church, that choſe to know no love, but that of God in a ſingle life?

St. *Paul* has done every thing to hinder a miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt from entring into marriage, except calling it a ſinful ſtate, when he ſays, *He that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may pleaſe his wife*: and how could he more powerfully preſs the virgin-life upon the clergy, than when he ſays, *He that is married, careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may pleaſe the Lord.*

I ſhall conclude this matter with a paſſage taken from the *Serious Call to a devout and Holy Life*; it is a quotation from *Euſebius*, who lived at the time of the firſt

firſt general council, when the faith of our *Nicene Creed* was eſtabliſhed: his words are theſe, "There have been, ſaith he, inſtituted in the church of Chriſt, two ways or manners of living; the one raiſed above the ordinary ſtate of nature, and common ways of living, rejects wedlock, poſſeſſions, and wordly goods, and being wholly ſeparated and removed from the ordinary converſation of common life, is appropriated and devoted ſolely to the worſhip and ſervice of God, through an *exceeding degree* of *heavenly love*: They who are of this order of people, ſeem dead to the life of this world, and having their bodies only upon earth, are in their minds and contemplations dwelling in heaven; from whence, like ſo many heavenly inhabitants, they look down upon human life, making *interceſſions* and *oblations* for the whole race of mankind; and this, not with the blood of beaſts, or the fat, or ſmoak and burning of bodies, but with the higheſt exerciſes of true piety, with cleanſed and purified hearts, and with a whole form of life ſtrictly devoted to virtue: theſe are their ſacrifices, which they are continually offering unto God, and implore his mercy and favour for themſelves and their fellow creatures. Chriſtianity receives this as the perfect manner of life.

"The other is of a lower form, and ſuiting itſelf more to the condition of human nature, admits of chaſte wedlock, the care of children and families, of trade and buſineſs, and goes through all the employments of life, under a ſenſe of piety and fear of God: Now, they who have choſen this manner of life, have their ſet times for retirement and ſpiritual exerciſe, and particular days are ſet apart for their hearing and learning the word of God: and this order of people are conſidered as in the ſecond ſtate of piety."* Here you ſee the perfection of the Chriſtian life plainly ſet out, and how it was, that numbers of private perſons, men and women, who had no ſhare in the eccleſiaſtical office, yet, by this perfection of life, were *holy and heavenly interceſſors* for the whole

* Serious Call, *&c.* p. 134.

whole race of mankind. Now, may we not ſuppoſe, that the clergy were in this number of people that were thus heavenly in the whole form of their life, thus devoted to God and the edification of the church, by embracing the perfect life of Chriſtianity? If they were not, do they not ſtand plainly condemned, ſince *Chriſtianity held this to be the perfect manner of life?* I ſhall only add, that till ſuch a degree of heavenly love, ſuch a ſenſe of the holineſs and heavenly nature of the ſacred calling, till ſuch a deſire of perfection is awakened in the clergy, as ſhuts out all carnal love and worldly tempers from their hearts, they cannot be ſuch prieſts and interceſſors with God, ſuch patterns of holineſs, ſuch kindlers of divine love and heavenly deſires amongſt men, as the nature of their office both intends and requires of them.

If a candidate for holy orders dares not make this total donation of himſelf to God, to be an inſtrument of his good pleaſure only in the ſervice of the goſpel, if it is not his real ſtate, to wiſh nothing in this world but the moſt perfect purification of his nature, if he deſires any thing in and by his office, but a concurrence with Jeſus Chriſt in the ſalvation of ſouls; if he has any reſerves of ſelf-ſeeking, or ſelf-advancement in the world, any fleſhly paſſions which he hopes to make conſiſtent with the duties of his profeſſion; if he is not ſeparated in will and deſire from all that is not God, and the ſervice of God, he muſt be ſaid to want the beſt proofs of his being called by the Holy Ghoſt.

But the doctor has a *ſecond reply. Whether, you conſider the* divinity, *or the* ſenſe *of this, could* George Fox *himſelf have out-done it?* p. 48. This reply, conſider'd in itſelf, might have its place amongſt thoſe *algebraic quantities*, that are ſome degrees leſs than nothing; but with regard to the doctor's purpoſe it has ſomething in it, for it is an appeal to that which is very powerful, which has ſuppreſſed many a good truth; it is an appeal to vulgar prejudice: and ſhews that the doctor is not without his expectations from that quarter.

quarter. And thus it is, that the catholick artiſt in his country plays a *Martin Luther*, when he wants to reproach that which he knows not how to confute. What degree of ſenſe, or divinity *George Fox* was poſſeſſed of, I cannot pretend to ſay, having never read any of his writings; but if he has ſaid any divine truths, I ſhould be as well pleaſed in ſeeing them in his books, as in any of the fathers of the primitive church. For as the goſpel requires me to be as glad to ſee piety, equity, ſtrict ſobriety, and extenſive charity in a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, as in a Chriſtian; as it obliges me to look with pleaſure upon their virtues, and be thankful to God, that ſuch perſons have ſo much of true and ſound Chriſtianity; ſo it cannot be an unchriſtian ſpirit to be as glad to ſee truths in one party of Chriſtians as in another; and to look with pleaſure upon any good doctrines that are held by any ſect of Chriſtian people, and be thankful to God, that they have ſo much of the genuine truths of the goſpel. For we have no complaint againſt thoſe that are divided from us, but what proceeds from a Chriſtian fear, that what they hold and practiſe will not be ſo beneficial to them, as our religion will be to us, muſt we not have the utmoſt readineſs and willingneſs to find, own, and rejoice in thoſe good doctrines and practices which they ſtill retain? If a poor pilgrim, under a neceſſity of travelling a dangerous and difficult road, had, through his own perverſeneſs loſt the uſe of a leg, and the ſight of one eye, could we be ſaid to have any charitable concern for his perverſeneſs and misfortune, unleſs we were glad to ſee that he had one good leg, and one good eye ſtill left, and unleſs we hoped and deſired they might bring him at laſt to his journey's end? Now let every part of the church which takes itſelf to be ſound and good, and is only angry at every other part, becauſe they have *leſſened the means* of their own ſalvation; let her but have thus much charity in her anger, and then ſhe will be glad to ſee, in every perverſe diviſion, ſomething like the one good leg, and the one good eye of the pilgrim,

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and which ſhe will hope and wiſh may do them the ſame good.

Selfiſhneſs and *partiality* are very baſe qualities, even in the things of this world, but in the doctrines of religion they are of a baſer nature. Now this is the *greateſt evil* that the diviſion of the church has brought forth; it raiſes in every communion a ſelfiſh, partial orthodoxy, which conſiſts in courageouſly defending all that it has, and condemning all that it has not. And thus all champions are trained up in defence of their own truth, their own learning, and their own church, and he has the moſt merit, who likes every thing, defends every thing among themſelves, and leaves nothing uncenſured in thoſe that are of a different communion. Now how can truth, and goodneſs, and religion be more ſtruck at, than by ſuch defenders of it? If you aſk why the great biſhop of *Meaux* wrote ſo many learned books againſt all parts of the *reformation*, it is becauſe he was born in *France*, and bred up in the boſom of *mother church*. Had he been born in *England*, had *Oxford*, or *Cambridge* been his *alma mater*, he might have rival'd our great biſhop *Stillingfleet*, and would have wrote as many learned folio's againſt the church of *Rome* as he has done. And yet I will venture to ſay, that if each church could produce but one man a-piece that had the piety of an apoſtle, and the impartial love of the firſt Chriſtians, in the firſt church at *Jeruſalem*, a Proteſtant and a Papiſt of this ſtamp, would not want half a ſheet of paper to hold their articles of union, nor be half an hour before they were of one religion. If therefore it ſhould be ſaid, that churches are divided, and made unfriendly to one another, by learning, a logic, a hiſtory, a criticiſm in the hands of partiality, it would be ſaying that which every particular church too much proves to be true. Aſk why even the beſt amongſt the Catholicks are very ſhy of owning the validity of the orders of our church; it is becauſe they are afraid of removing any odium from the reformation. Aſk why no Proteſtants touch upon the benefit of celibacy in thoſe who are ſeparated from worldly buſi-

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neſs to preach the goſpel, 'tis becauſe that would be ſeeming to leſſen the Roman error of not ſuffering marriage in her clergy. Aſk why even the moſt pious amongſt the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church, are afraid to aſſert, the neceſſity of ſeeking only to the guidance and inſpiration of the holy ſpirit; 'tis becauſe the *Quakers*, who have broken off from the church, have made this doctrine their corner ſtone.

If we loved truth as ſuch; if we ſought it for its own ſake; if we loved our neighbour as ourſelves; if we deſired nothing by our religion but to be acceptable to God; if we equally deſired the ſalvation of all men; then nothing of this ſpirit could have any place in us.

There is therefore a *Catholick* ſpirit, a *communion of ſaints* in the love of God and all goodneſs, which no one can learn from that which is called orthodoxy in particular churches. It is only to be had by a total dying to all worldly views, by a pure love of God, and by ſuch an unction from above, as delivers the mind from all ſelfiſhneſs, and makes it love truth and goodneſs with an equality of affection in every man, whether he be *Chriſtian*, *Jew*, or *Gentile*. He that would obtain this divine ſpirit in this diſordered ſtate of things, and live in a divided part of the church, without partaking of its diviſion, muſt have theſe three truths deeply fixed in his mind: *Firſt*, that univerſal love, which gives the whole ſtrength of the heart to God, and makes us love every man as we love ourſelves, is the nobleſt, the moſt God-like ſtate of the ſoul, and the utmoſt perfection to which the moſt perfect religion can raiſe us; and that no religion does any man any good, but ſo far as it brings this love into him. This will ſhew us, that true orthodoxy can no where be found, but in a pure diſintereſted love of God and our neighbour. *Secondly*, That in the preſent divided ſtate of the church, truth itſelf is torn and divided aſunder; and that therefore he is the only true Catholick, who has more of truth, and leſs of error, than is hedged in by any

any divided part. This truth will enable us to live in a divided part, *unhurt* by its diviſion, and keep us in a true liberty and fitneſs to be aſſiſted by all the good that we hear or ſee in any other part of the church. And thus uniting in heart and ſpirit with all that is holy and good in all churches, we enter into the true *communion of ſaints*, and become real members of the holy Catholick church, tho' we uſe the outward worſhip of only one part of it. It is thus, that the angels, as miniſtring ſpirits, aſſiſt, unite and co-operate with every thing that is holy and good, in every diviſion of mankind. *Thirdly*, he muſt always have in mind this great truth, that it is the glory of the divine juſtice to have no reſpect of parties or perſons, but to ſtand equally diſpoſed to that which is right and wrong, in *Jew* and *Gentile*. He therefore that would like as God likes, and condemn as God condemns, muſt have neither the eyes of the Papiſt nor the Proteſtant; he muſt like no truth the leſs becauſe *Ignatius Loyola* or *John Bunyan* were very zealous for it; nor have the leſs averſion to any error, becauſe Dr. *Trap* or *George Fox* had brought it forth. Now if this impartial juſtice, is the ſpirit which will judge the world at the laſt day, how can this ſpirit be too ſoon or too much in us? Or what can do us more hurt than that which is an hindrance of it? When I was a young ſcholar of the Univerſity, I heard a great religioniſt ſay, that if he could believe the late *king of France* was in heaven, he could not wiſh to go thither himſelf. This was exceeding ſhocking: Yet ſomething of this temper muſt be more or leſs in thoſe, who have, as a point of orthodoxy, worked themſelves up into a hearty contempt and hatred of thoſe that are divided from them. He that has been all his life long uſed to look with great abhorrence upon thoſe whom he called *ſuperſtitious bigots, dreaming viſionaries, falſe ſaints, canting enthuſiaſts*, muſt naturally expect they will be treated by God as they have been by him; and if he had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, ſuch people would find it hard to get a place in it. But it ſtands us greatly in hand to get rid of this temper before we

die ; ſince nothing but univerſal love can enter into the kingdom of God.

We often hear of people of great zeal and orthodoxy, declaring on their death-beds their ſtrict attachment to the church of *England*, and making ſolemn proteſtations againſt all other churches; but how much better would it be, if ſuch a perſon was to ſay, " In this divided ſtate of Chriſtendom, I muſt conform to ſome divided part of it, and therefore I live and die in communion with the church of *England* ; fully believing, that if I worſhip God in *ſpirit and in truth* in this divided part of the church, I ſhall be as acceptable to him, as if I had been a faithful member of the one whole church, before it was broken into ſeparate parts. But as I am now going out of this diſordered diviſion, into a more univerſal ſtate of things, as I am now falling into the hands of the great Creator and lover of all ſouls; as I am going to the God of all churches, to a kingdom of univerſal love, which muſt have its inhabitants from all people, nations, and languages of the earth ; ſo in this ſpirit of univerſal love, I deſire to perform my laſt act of communion in this divided church, uniting in heart with all that is holy, good, and acceptable to God in all other churches ; praying, from the bottom of my ſoul, that every church may have its ſaints; that God's kingdom may come, his will be done in every diviſion of Chriſtians and men, and that *every thing that hath breath may praiſe the Lord.*"

We have often ſeen learned Proteſtants very zealous in pulling to pieces the lives of the ſaints of the *Romiſh* church, and caſting all the reproach and ridicule they can, upon their wondrous ſpirit; tho' the lives of the ſaints of the primitive church may be expoſed in the ſame manner. Now, whence does this proceed? Why, from a ſecret touch of that ſpirit which could not bear to have the late king of *France* in heaven; it proceeds from a partial, ſelfiſh orthodoxy, which cannot bear to hear, or own, that the ſpirit and bleſſing of God are ſo viſible in a church from which it is divided. But if a perſon be of this

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ſpirit, what does it ſignify where he has his outward church? If a *Romiſh prieſt* in the north of *England* could not bear the ſplendor of a life ſo devoted to God, ſo fruitful in all good works, as was that of the lady *Elizabeth Haſtings*, if he ſhould want to ſully the brightneſs of her Chriſtian graces, and prove her to have been no ſaint, leſt it ſhould appear, that the ſpirit of God was not confined to the *Romiſh* church, would not ſuch a zeal ſhew a worſe ſpirit, than that of ſuperſtition, a greater depravity of heart, than the ſaying now and then an *Ave Mary?*

The more we know of the corruptions and hindrances of piety in the church of *Rome*, the more we ſhould rejoice, that in every age ſo many eminent ſaints, have appeared in it, whom we ſhould thankfully behold as ſo many great lights hung out by God, to ſhew the true way to heaven, as ſo many joyful proofs that Chriſt is ſtill preſent, even in that church, and that the gates of hell have not quite prevailed againſt it. Who that has the leaſt ſpark of heaven in his ſoul, can help rejoicing in this manner at the appearance of St. *Bernard*, a *Tereſa*, a *Francis* de *Sales*, in that church? Who can help praiſing God, that her invented devotions, ſuperſtitious uſe of images, and invocation of ſaints, have not ſo ſuppreſſed the graces of an evangelical life, but that amongſt *cardinals*, *jeſuits*, *prieſts*, *friars*, *monks* and *nuns*, ſome have been found, who ſeemed to live for no other end, but to give glory to God and edification to men, and whoſe writings have every thing in them, that can guide the ſoul out of the corruption of this life into union with God? And he who through a partial orthodoxy is diverted from feeding in theſe green paſtures of life, whoſe abhorrence of jeſuitical craft, keeps him from reading the works of an *Alvares du Pas*, a *Rodrigues*, a *Pere Jurin* and ſuch like jeſuits, has a greater loſs than he can eaſily imagine: And if any clergyman can read the life of *Bartholomeus a Martyribis* a *Spaniſh* archbiſhop, who ſat with great influence at the very council of *Trent*, without being edified by it, and deſiring to read it again and again, I know not why

he ſhould like the lives of the apoſtolical fathers: And if any Proteſtant biſhop ſhould read the *Stimulus Paſtorum* wrote by this Popiſh prelate, he muſt confeſs it to be a book, that would have done honour to the beſt archbiſhop, that the reformation has to boaſt of. O my God, how ſhall I unlock this myſtery? In the land of darkneſs, over-run with ſuperſtition, where divine worſhip ſeems to be all ſhew and ceremony, thou haſt thoſe, who are fired with the pure love of thee, who renounce every thing for thee, who are devoted wholly to thee, who think of nothing, write of nothing, deſire nothing but the honour, and praiſe, and adoration that is due to thee, and who call all the world to the maxims of the goſpel, the perfection of the life of Chriſt. But in the regions where light is ſprung up, whence ſuperſtition is fled, where all that is outward in religion ſeems to be prun'd, dreſs'd, and put in its true order; there a cleanſed ſhell, a whited ſepulchre, ſeems too generally to cover a dead Chriſtianity.

The error of all errors, and that which makes the blackeſt charge againſt the *Romiſh* church, is perſecution, a religious ſword drawn againſt the liberty of ſerving God according to our beſt light. Now, tho' this is the frightful monſter of that church, yet, even here, who, except it be the church of *England*, can throw the firſt ſtone at her? Where muſt we look for a church that has ſo renounced this perſecuting beaſt, as they have renounced the uſe of incenſe, the ſprinklings of holy water, or extreme unction? What part of the reformation abroad has not practiſed and defended perſecution? What ſect of Diſſenters at home have not, in their day of power dreadfully condemned toleration?

When it ſhall pleaſe God to diſpoſe the hearts of all Chriſtian princes, entirely to deſtroy this antichriſtian beaſt, and leave all their ſubjects in that religious freedom which they have from God; then the light of the goſpel, the power of its miniſters, the uſefulneſs of its rites, the benediction of its ſacraments

ments will have proper time and place to ſhew themſelves; and that religon which has the moſt of a divine power in it, whoſe offices and ſervices do moſt good to the heart, whoſe miniſters are moſt devoted to God, and have the moſt proof of the preſence of Chriſt with them, will become, as it ought, the moſt univerſal. All that I have ſaid on this matter, has been occaſioned by the doctor's appeal to vulgar prejudice; and is only to intimate, that the greateſt evil which the diviſion of the church brings forth, is a ſectarian, ſelfiſh ſpirit, which with the orthodoxy of the *old Jews*, would have God to be only their God, and themſelves only, his choſen people. If therefore we would be true Chriſtians of the Catholick church, we muſt put off this partiality of the carnal *Jew*; we muſt enter into a Catholick affection for all men, love the ſpirit of the goſpel wherever we ſee it; not work ourſelves up into an abhorrence of a *George Fox*, or an *Ignatius Loyola*; but be equally glad of the light of the goſpel wherever it ſhines, or from whatever quarter it comes; and give the ſame praiſe to God for an eminent example of piety, wherever it appears, either in Papiſt or Proteſtant.

To return. Dr. *Trap* ſuppoſing the world running into a charity that would ruin wife and family, aſks his charitable *Half thinker*, "Did you never hear that *charity begins* at home? Did you never read that of St. *Paul*, If any provide not for his own, and eſpecially thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an Infidel?" The doctor's proverb I meddled not with, but the text of St. *Paul* I reſcued from his groſs miſapplication. That text has no more relation to an exceſſive charity, than to an exceſſive faſting. The apoſtle neither thought of this ſin in this place, nor in any other part of his writings; nor does he ever give the ſmalleſt hint of the danger of falling into it. The one queſtion was, whether poor widows, who had near relations, that could ſupply their wants, ſhould be maintained by the church? The apoſtle determines the matter thus; that if ſuch perſons, who

were thus able, did not thus provide for, that is, supply the wants of their poor kindred, they were so far from having the faith of Christians, that they wanted a goodness that was to be found amongst infidels: This is the whole of the apostle's doctrine in this text. He speaks of providing for those of our own house or family, in no other sense, than as it signifies our charity to them, when they fall into distress; but the doctor, trusting to the sound of the *English* word *provide*, grafts all these errors upon this plain text. When it is said, a person has provided well for his family, every one supposes that he has *laid up well in store*, or got an *estate* to be divided amongst them for their future subsistance. From this use of the *English* word, *provide*; the doctor would have it believed, that the apostle teaches every head of a family to be carefully and continually laying up in store for his kindred. But the apostle is as infinitely distant from this thought, as from teaching them to get their cellars filled with strong liquors. When he here says, *provide*, he says only this, Shut not your eyes to the wants of your poor kindred, but provide them with what they have need of, and don't let them fall to the charge of the church. The doctor's second error is this; according to this text, a Christian ought not to hinder himself from thus laying up in store for his family, or leave them to live by their labour and industry, through an excess of charity to his poor neighbours. But the apostle has not one single syllable about this; and is as far from saying any thing like it, as from saying, that a Christian, when he makes a feast, should only invite his rich kindred and acquaintance. The one has as much of the apostle and the gospel for it, as the other. The doctor's *third* error is this; that, according to this text, he, who by a daily, continual charity, has incapacitated himself to lay up in store, a fixed provision for the future maintenance of his family, is condemn'd by the apostle as *denying the faith*, and *worse than an infidel*: Tho' the apostle speaks no more here against

against such a person, than he speaks in the praise of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*.

The person here condemn'd, is not he who through a continual charity, is hindred from laying up in store; not he, who, through a Christian love of relieving the distressed members of Christ, is content with helping his own family to food and raiment; but it is that Christian, who being able, is yet unwilling to support his near relations, that are fallen into poverty, and leaves them to be maintained by the church; this is the only Christian the apostle here condemns, as having put off the piety of the gospel, and wanting even the virtue of good-natur'd Infidels.

I said further, Had the apostle known a parent in his days, who, through his great charity for others, had reduced his own family to want of relief, he would have been so far from rebuking him as an half-thinking fool, or exposing him to others, as guilty of madness, that he would have told them, such a one had consecrated himself and family to the church, as the proper objects of their care. To which the doctor gives this answer, "This he affirms, and this I deny; and as he produces no other proof, so I give no other answer, p. 69." What I said, has its proof from the common voice of Christianity in the apostles days; as may sufficiently appear from the following passage of St. *Clement*, fellow-labourer of the apostle, and bishop of no less a church than that of *Rome*. "We have known many amongst us, who have delivered themselves into bonds and slavery, that they might restore others to their liberty; many who have hired out themselves servants unto others, that by their wages they might feed and sustain them that wanted." *

Will the doctor now say, that this is no proof of that which I affirmed of the apostle, that he would have had a love for those who were become sufferers by their own charity to others? Does not this apostolical bishop make it his boast, and the glory of Christianity;

* 1 Epist. ad Cor.

Chriſtianity; not that they had ſome, but many ſuch among them?

It was not only in the firſt church at *Jeruſalem*, that the Chriſtians had all things common. For St. *Barnabas* writing to ſome converted *Jews*, teaches them, to call nothing their own in this world, becauſe they were called to the common enjoyment of the things of eternity. *Communi abis in omnibus rebus proximo tuo; nihil dices quicquam tibi proprium; ſi enim communicatis invicem, in bonis, incorruptibilibus, quanto magis in corruptibilibus.* †

An age after this. *Juſtin Martyr* thus glories of the power of the goſpel-faith; "We, ſays he, who before we became Chriſtians, loved our wealth and poſſeſſions abeve all things, now give up all property in them, that they may be in common for all that want them. *Qui pecuniarum & poſſeſſionum fructus ac proventus præ rebus omnibus adamabamus, nunc etiam quæ habemus in commune conferimus, & cum indigentibus quibuſcunque communicamus.*" * What a lean, heathenish figure muſt the doctor's proverb of charity *beginning at home*, have made in the days of St. *Barnabas*, *Clement*, or *Juſtin Martyr*? Or who durſt then have made ſuch an uſe of the text of St. *Paul*, as the doctor has done, or coupled it with ſuch a proverb? Were any of theſe firſt ſaints to judge of this matter, the doctor might, for ought I know, have a worſe reprimand from them for ſo doing, than if he had only coupled Cardinals with Pluraliſts.

In order to ſhew the doctor that he was very unſeaſonably preaching againſt the ſin and folly of an exceſſive charity, when yet every part of the church wanted to be ſhewn how they were fallen from the goſpel-degree of it, I ſet before him an imaginary biſhop of *Wincheſter*, yet drawn according to the model of the holy biſhops of the firſt ages. I ſuppoſed this biſhop ſo filled with the ſpirit of Chriſt, that he looked upon all the revenues of his ſee, with no other eyes, than as our Saviour looked at that bag that was carried along with him by his diſciples, as ſo much for

† Epiſt. Bar. No. 10. * 2 Apol.

for his own neceſſities and the neceſſities of others. I ſuppoſed that in this ſpirit, he ſo expended his yearly income, that he choſe to bring up his children ſtrangers to all worldly figure, and in as low a ſtate of labour as that to which our Lord and his apoſtles had been uſed. I ſuppoſed, that by a piety of life and converſation, equal to this exalted charity, he had inſtill'd ſuch an heavenly ſpirit into his wife and children, as made them highly thankful for their condition, and full of praiſe to God for the bleſſing of ſuch a relation. Dr. *Trap*, tho' an antient divine, ſeems to ſtart back with fright, at the ſight of this apoſtolical biſhop, and ſuppoſes, that if ſuch a monſter of a man was now to get into a biſhoprick, he muſt needs make his children extraordinary wicked, fill them with abhorrence of his memory, and ſpread infidelity in the world, by making Chriſtianity a jeſt to infidels, *p.* 71.

I ſay, ſays the doctor, *very clearly and plainly*, that *ſuch a biſhop muſt be a mad-man*, p. 70. Now, if the doctor will prove from the ſcriptures this biſhop to be a mad-man, it muſt be for the following reaſons; *Firſt*, becauſe he had ſo mean a ſpirit, as to ſuffer the ſon of a biſhop to work under a carpenter, as the Redeemer of mankind had done. *Secondly*, becauſe he taught himſelf and his family to believe that which St. *Paul* believed, that *having food and raiment, we ought to be therewith content*. *Thirdly*, becauſe he came up to the very letter of the great commandment, of *loving our neighbour as ourſelves*. *Fourthly*, becauſe he imitated the ſpirit of the firſt Chriſtians at *Jeruſalem*, who accounted nothing to be their own that they poſſeſſed. *Fifthly*, becauſe he had turned himſelf and family from all the vanity of this world, the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life. Sixthly, becauſe he ſeemed to have this of the apoſtle fixed in his mind, " He that ſaith, he abideth in Chriſt, ought ſo to walk, as he walked." *Seventhly*, becauſe his life was faſhioned according to this doctrine of the holy Jeſus, " Learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly of heart: I am among you, as he that ſerveth:

Whoſo-

Whoſoever will be great among you, let him be your miniſter; even as the ſon of man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter." For it may be ſaid with the greateſt certainty, that if the doctor will have any proof from the ſcripture of the madneſs of this biſhop, it muſt be as abſurd as the reaſons here all dged.

Come we now to conſider this biſhop according to the ſpirit, practice and laws of the church in all ages. Any one verſed ever ſo little in the hiſtory of the church, muſt ſee at the firſt ſight, that this ſuppoſed biſhop is a true copy of the firſt apoſtolical fathers. And if this biſhop was to be accounted a madman, becauſe of the manner of his life, we muſt come down ſeveral ages after *Conſtantine*, to the *mitre* and triple crown, before we could find a biſhop in his ſenſes. The *Clements*, the *Polycarps*, the *Ignatius's*, the *Irenæus's*, the *Cyprian's*, the *Baſils*, the *Ambroſe's*, and a number that have long graced our calendars, as ſaints, muſt take their place among bedlamites: for they were all of them to a tittle, the very man I have ſuppoſed at *Wincheſter*. They conſidered every penny that was brought in by the goſpel, as a proviſion for the poor, and themſelves as only entitled to their common ſhare out of it. They durſt no more raiſe any of their relations to a ſplendor of life, or give them any figure from the revenues of the church, than commit ſacrilege. They gloried as much in their own ſtrict poverty and want of worldly figure, as in their having totally renounced idols.

But we have much more than primitive example for our biſhop of *Wincheſter*: the doctrine and laws of the church have unanimouſly from age to age, to the very council of *Trent*, required every biſhop to be of the ſame ſpirit of which we have ſuppoſed him. The church, both by the doctrine of fathers, and the canons of councils, conſtantly maintains; *Firſt*, that the clergy are not proprietors, but barely ſtewards of the benefices they enjoy: having them for no other end, but for their own neceſſary, frugal

ſubſiſtence,

ſubſiſtence, and the relief of the poor. [a] *Secondly*, that a clergyman uſing his benefice for his *own indulgence*, or the enriching his *own family*, is guilty of ſacrilege, and is a robber and murderer of the poor. [b] *Thirdly*, that if a clergyman has a reaſonable ſubſiſtence of his own, and is not in the ſtate of the poor, then let his benefice be what it will, he has no right to uſe any part of it for himſelf, nor for his kindred, unleſs they be fit to be conſidered among thoſe poor that are to be relieved by the church. [c] *Fourthly*, that every biſhop and clergyman is to live in an humble, frugal, outward ſtate of life, ſeeking for no honour or dignity in the world, but that which ariſes from the diſtinction and luſtre of his virtues. [d] *Fifthly*, that a benefic'd clergyman uſing the goods of the church for his own indulgence, or raiſing fortunes for his children, or their expenſive education, is ſacriligious, and a robber of the poor. [e] *Sixthly*, that every clergyman is to die out of the church as poor as he entred into it. [f] *Seventhly*, that a clergyman dying, cannot leave or bequeath any thing to his children or friends, but barely that which he had independently of the church. [g]

May

[a] Nihil eccleſia niſi Fidem poſſidet.——Poſſeſſio eccleſiæ eſt Egenorum ſumptus, *Amb. Ep.* 31. [b] Si Pauperum Compauperes ſumus, & *noſtra* ſunt, & *illorum*. Si autem privatim quæ nobis ſufficiunt, poſſidemus, non ſunt illa *noſtrum*, ſed Pauperum *Procurationem* gerimus, non Proprietatem nobis Uſurpatione damnabili vindicamus, *Auguſ. Ep.* 50 *ad Bonif.* [c] Quoniam quicquid habent Clerici, Pauperum eſt——Qui bonis Parentum & opibus ſuſtentari poſſent, ſi quod Pauperum eſt, accipiunt, *Sacrilegium profecto* committunt, & per Abuſionem Talium, Judicium ſibi manducant, & bibunt, *Hieron. Ep. ad Dammaſ.* [d] Epiſcopus vilem *Suppellectilem*, & *Menſam*, ac *Victum Pauperem* habeat, & Dignitatis ſuæ Authoritatem Fide & Vitæ meritis quærat, *Concil. Carthag.* 4. [e] Memento quod *Pauperem Vitam* Sacerdos gerere debet, & ideo ſi ſuperbiam habet, ſi magno gaudet Beneficio, præter victum & veſtitum *quod ſupereſt*, Pauperibus dare non differat, quia omnia *pauperum* ſunt. *Aug. Serm.* 37. *ad Fratres.* [f] Hujus tu e vicino ſectare Veſtigia, & cæterorum, qui Virtutum illius ſimiles ſunt, quos Sacerdotium & *humiliores* facit & *pauperes*. *Hieron. Ep.* 4. *ad Ruſtic.* [g] Præcipimus ut in poteſtate ſua Epiſcopus Eccleſiæ Res habeat—eis autem quibus indiget, (ſi tamen indiget) ad ſuas neceſſitates percipiat.

May it not therefore well be wondered what could provoke Dr. *Trap* to cenſure our biſhop as a madman, whoſe whole form of life, and uſe of his biſhoprick, is not only after the model of the firſt and greateſt ſaints that ever were biſhops, but alſo ſuch as the whole church from the beginning, both in council and out of council, from age to age, hath abſolutely required of every beneficed clergyman, who would not be condemn'd by her, as ſacrilegious, and a robber of the poor? They who would ſee the whole matter ſet in a clear light, may read an excellent treatiſe of the learned *Dupin*, wrote near the end of his life, where this truth is by him aſſerted and inconteſtably proved, *viz.* That whatever changes have been made in the nature and tenure of the goods and revenues of the church, or however they have been variouſly divided amongſt eccleſiaſticks, yet this has remained *always unchangeable and undeniable*, That a clergyman was no proprietor of his benefice; that he could only take ſo much of it to his own uſe, as was neceſſary to his ſubſiſtance, and then the remainder, be it what it would, belong'd to the

percipiat. *Canon. Apoſt.* 40.——eas veluti Deo contemplante diſpenſet; nec ei liceat ex iis aliquid contingere, aut Parentibus propriis (quæ dei ſunt) condonare. Quod ſi Pauperes ſunt, tanquam Pauperibus ſubminiſtret, ne eorum occaſione Eccleſiæ Res deprecantur, *Can. Apoſt.* 39. Manifeſta ſint quæ pertinere videntur ad Eccleſiam cum Notitia Preſbiterorum & Diaconorum, ut ſi contigerit Epiſcopo migrare de Seculo, nec *Res Eccleſiæ* depereant, nec quæ *propria* probantur Epiſcopi, ſub occaſione Rerum Eccleſiæ pervadantur: juſtum enim eſt ut ſua Epiſcopus quibus voluerit, derelinquat, & quæ Eccleſiæ ſunt, eidem conſervantur Eccleſiæ. *Concil. Antioch*, chap. 24. Quicunque Clerici, qui nihil habentes ordinantur, & *tempore Epiſcopatus*, vel *Clericatus ſui*, agros, vel quæcunque predia nomine ſuo comparant, tanquam Rerum dominicarum *Inviſionis Crimini* teneantur obnoxii, niſi admoniti, Eccleſiæ eadem ipſa contulerint. *(N. B.)* Si autem ipſis proprie aliquid *liberalitate* alicujus, vel *Succeſſione* Cognationis obvenerit, faciant, inde quod ipſorum Propoſito congruit. Sacerdotes ipſis quoque Filiis ſuis, quibus paterna debetur Hæreditas, nihil debent derelinquere, niſi quod ſibi a Parentibus derelictum eſt: *Ergo* qui *ditior eſt* Sacerdos, quam venit ad Sacerdotium, quicquid plus habuerit, *non filiis debet dare*, ſed Pauperibus, & Sanctis fratribus, ut reddat ea quæ Domini ſunt, Domino ſuo. *Hieron. in Ezech.* chap. 46.

the poor. This, says he, is strictly maintained by the canons of councils, both before and after the division of ecclesiastical revenues.

But if this be the case, if this be an incontestable doctrine, supported by every authority that can be brought for any one doctrine of the gospel, have we not here an utter condemnation of pluralities? Is it not an affront to the gospel, to the plainest maxims of right and wrong, the whole authority of the church, to offer one single word in defence of them? Logical, scholastic distinctions and definitions of the nature of parishes and residence, can signify no more here, where the whole nature of the thing is to be avoided, than the same art of words, when used by *Jesuitical Casuists*, can justify the violation of moral duties. And if Dr. *Trap* was only to look at this one doctrine, he would have no reason to think it so sad a thing, to see *Pluralists* coupled with *Cardinals*. "*See*, says the learned *Dupin*, rules which will appear hard to many of the benefic'd clergy, but yet, they are true, conformable to natural equity, the laws, custom, and tradition of the church, and the practice of the most holy bishops; and wo be to those that observe them not! *Malheur a Ceux qui ne les suivent pas.*" * And therefore he concludes thus, "There may be many amongst the beneficed clergy who err in this matter, through an ignorance of that which is required of them; therefore what I have said ought to be taken in good part, as proceeding from charity, and a sincere love of truth."

* Ibid. *p.* 442.

A

SHORT but SUFFICIENT

CONFUTATION

OF

Bp. *WARBURTON*'s

Projected DEFENCE

(As he calls it)

OF

CHRISTIANITY,

IN HIS

Divine Legation of MOSES,

IN A

LETTER

To the RIGHT REVEREND the

Lord Biſhop of LONDON.

My LORD,

THE reaſon of my preſuming to write to your lordſhip on the following ſubject is, becauſe it is a matter on which your lordſhip has employed your excellent pen, greatly to the benefit of the world.

And the reaſon of my writing at all, is owing to a book newly publiſhed * in defence of biſhop *Warburton*, in which your lordſhip, is charged with a multitude of contradictions, and inconſiſtencies relating to this point.

It is not my deſign to enter here as an aſſiſtant to your lordſhip. For this is quite needleſs.

My intention is, as mentioned in the title page. And becauſe biſhop *Warburton* has owned this writer, as a moſt able defender of his ſcheme. I have taken occaſion to ſhew, that it is a ſcheme ſo contrary to ſcripture, and the truth of things, as no art of words, or ſtretch of genius, however powerful in paradox, can ever be able to ſupport.

The author of this book, as biſhop *Warburton* aſſures us, † is too modeſt to make his name known to the world; a quality, which from the reading of his book, one would not ſuſpect to be ſo predominant in him.--But though modeſty has forced him to conceal his name, yet he has given us ſome information of his character. He begins; "I, who am a bare looker-on, and abſolutely diſengaged from all that biaſs of affection, which is ſo wont to wrap the fol-

* *Free and Candid Examination of the biſhop of* London's *ſermons*, &c.

† *Preface to Critical Enquiry*, &c.

lowers of an old ſyſtem, or the inventors of a new, have done my beſt to examine this queſtion with all impartiality." †

Had one of the antient writers of *Greece* ſaid this of himſelf, how poſitive, might a modern critic have been, from the deciſive words, a *bare looker-on*, that he had never wrote upon the ſame ſubject before? And that therefore, any book of that kind aſcribed to him, muſt infallibly be falſe and ſpurious. And yet, to the confuſion of criticiſm, this author, who unaſked, and of his own free motion, declares, that he begins this work as a bare looker-on, has for more than ten years before he made this declaration, been ſweating in the thickeſt duſt, and heat of doctor *Warburton*'s moſt ardent contention for novelties. *

I have the doctor's own words for this, both for the novelties, and this gentleman's wonderful zeal, and ſkill ſhewn in the defence of them, ſo many years ago.

" Notwithſtanding, ſays the doctor, all that can be ſaid, much clamour will ever attend novelties, though never ſo ſtrongly proved.—But truth ſeldom thrives the worſe, for unreaſonable oppoſition; and it would ſeem (N. B.) *not to be far from its eſtabliſhment*, when ſuch writers, as the following, appear in its defence —He hath eſtabliſhed what he undertook to defend, with ſuch extent of learning, and force of good argument, that I dare become reſponſible for all he ſays; and am willing, that thoſe of my opinions here debated, may ſtand, or fall, by the ſtrength, or the invalidity of this defence." ‡

This compliment, ſo very hearty, as well as elegant, puts me in mind of another, which the learned doctor made ſome time ſince, to the whole clergy of this nation; " a body of men, ſays he, the moſt learned, virtuous, and truly Chriſtian, that ever adorned a church, or ſtate." §

Theſe

† *Examination* p. 2.
* *Critical Enquiry*, &c. publiſhed 1746.
‡ *Preface to the Critical Enquiry*, p. 10.
§ *D. L. Vol.* 2. *Pref.* p. 6.

Theſe two compliments are of ſo very high a ſtrain, that were it not for the gravity of the doctor's character, and the ſeriouſneſs of the ſubject, the reader might have thought himſelf obliged to underſtand them both ironically. But if the doctor meant no more by this, than to buy a peace with the clergy, it muſt however be ſaid, that he gave more for the purchaſe of it, than a man of a ſcrupulous conſcience would have given.

However the compliment paid to this modeſt gentleman (who to be ſure, will now never be able to let the world know his name) ſeems to have been comfortably received in ſecret, by the ample return he has made the doctor for it, in his new book. Where, ſpeaking of a part of the doctor's performance, he ſays, " For this anſwer, I muſt refer the reader to the *D. L.* where he will find the ſubject handled with that force, ſolidity, and preciſion of argument, which ſo eminently diſtinguiſh the author from all his co-temporaries."

I ſhall now only juſt obſerve, that the compliment made by the biſhop to the clergy, has here very much abatement made to it, by his great ally.—For as matters now ſtand, if this very clergy, good, learned, and Chriſtian, beyond any thing ever heard of in the world before, ſhould one and all unite in oppoſing the biſhop, all that they could poſſibly get by their pains, would be only to ſhew, how eminently he ſtands diſtinguiſhed by force, ſolidity, and preciſion of argument from all his co-temporaries.

But no more of this. Biſhop *Warburton* grounds his ſcheme upon the doctrine of the old, and the new teſtament. But ſeeing he affirms that to be of the greateſt weight, which is taken from the new teſtament, and this author alſo begins there, I ſhall do ſo likewiſe.

Firſt, I ſhall clearly evince, that there is not in all the new teſtament, one ſingle text, which either in the letter, or the ſpirit proves, or has the leaſt tendency, or deſign to prove, that the *immortality* of the ſoul, or its perpetual duration after the death of the body,

body, was not an *universal, commonly* received opinion in, and through every age of the world from *Adam* to Chriſt. *Secondly*, that this doctrine, or belief of a future ſtate, was not *deſignedly ſecreted*, or *induſtriouſly hidden* from the eyes of the people of God by *Moſes*, neither by the types and figures of the law, nor by any other part of his writings.—From whence I ſhall occaſionally ſhew, that the true *ground* and *method* of Chriſtian redemption to eternal life, preached by the apoſtles, began with *Adam*, was the religion of *Adam*, and all his deſcendants. And alſo, that the writings of *Moſes*, and the patriarchal faith, give the very ſame full proof of the immortality of the ſoul, or a future ſtate, as the goſpel doth.

Need I not obſerve, that the whole merits of the debate, betwixt biſhop *Warburton* on the one ſide, and the whole Chriſtian church of all ages, on the other ſide, lie wholly in theſe particulars, which, if they can be made good, the whole coſtly fabric of the doctor's *projected Defence of Chriſtianity*, (as he calls it) built at the expence of ſuch immenſe treaſures of learning, fetched from all quarters of the antient and modern world, muſt have the fate which always happens to caſtles built in the air.

This learned writer, to ſhew, that the immortality of the ſoul, or its perpetual duration in a future ſtate, was entirely unknown in all the former diſpenſations of God, until the coming of Chriſt, begins with this paſſage of St. *Paul*. "God hath ſaved us according to his own purpoſe, and his grace which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began. But is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the goſpel."

On which words he thus proceeds: "We are told, that God, before the world began, had decreed to reſtore mankind, to that loſt inheritance of eternal life, which they ſhould forfeit by the diſobedience of our firſt parents. It is added, that this ſecret purpoſe, was now at laſt made manifeſt, by the appear-

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ing of Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and brought life, and immortality to light by the goſpel. The apoſtle mentions two periods, one, when it was originally formed in the ſecret counſels of God, the other, when it was publiſhed and revealed. The oppoſition between theſe two ſtates, ſeems neceſſarily to imply, that during the interval, it remained a ſecret.—If the apoſtle may be allowed to be his own interpreter, it will be eaſy to eſtabliſh this expoſition by a parallel paſſage in the epiſtle to *Titus*. *In hope of eternal life*, which God, that cannot lie, promiſed *before the world began, but hath in due time manifeſted his word through preaching*. Agreeably to this, the author of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, aſſures us, that the *great ſalvation of the goſpel*, that is, the *promiſe of eternal life, firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord*. But how could he be the firſt who taught this doctrine, if *Moſes* and the prophets had taught it long before? Or how did he begin to ſpeak of that, which ſo many others had been commiſſioned to teach before? Sometimes we are told, that life and immortality are brought to light, ſometimes that it was made manifeſt, ſometimes that it firſt began to be ſpoken by Jeſus Chriſt. The bringing to light, and making manifeſt, are equivalent to the beginning firſt to teach. And if ſo, the publication aſcribed to Jeſus Chriſt, muſt have been the firſt, and original publication, and not merely the illuſtrating, or giving new ſplendor to a doctrine, by the addition of one, or more circumſtances, unknown before. However, an eminent writer (meaning your Lodſhip) aſſures us, that Jeſus Chriſt did not give the firſt notice of this doctrine. All that I need remark upon it, is, that this aſſurance ſeems directly to contradict the word of inſpiration."

Your lordſhip has alſo ſaid, that the antient revelations *afforded a good proof of a future ſtate*. This writer makes great ſhew of triumph over this moſt true aſſertion, and is continually bringing it forth as a proof of your inconſiſtency, both with yourſelf, and the apoſtles.

But to follow him farther: " St. *Paul*, ſaith he, obſerves, that Jeſus Chriſt was ſent to ſhew light to the

the people, that is, to the *Jews*, and to the *Gentiles*. It is plain from hence, that he was a light to the firſt, in the ſame ſenſe, in which he was a light to the laſt; and therefore as he was a light to the Gentiles, by revealing the myſtery of redemption, in a reſtoration to life and immortality, to them *abſolutely unknown*, it ſeems to follow, that he alſo enlightened the *Jews*, by the manifeſtation of a truth *equally unknown*. —Agreeably to this account of things, *Zacharias*, in his prophecy upon the birth of *John* Baptiſt, ſays, *The day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us, to give light to them that ſat in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.* A deſcription, which will by no means permit us to ſuppoſe, that they were enlightened with a good proof of a future ſtate. If they had been enlightened with ſuch a proof, they would have been in the region of life and immortality, and not in the verge and ſhadow of death. They would not have been ſitting in darkneſs, but walking in the light, if they actually ſaw the grand object in queſtion: How conſiſtent it is, to aſſign a good view of an object, to a people ſitting in darkneſs, muſt be left to the judgment of others. However, this ſeems to be the neceſſary conſequence of affirming, that the *Jews* had a good proof of a future life."

This is the glaring contradiction, which he is continually charging upon your lordſhip throughout his whole book. Again, he attacks your lordſhip thus, from your own words: "St. *Peter*, ſays his lordſhip tells all Chriſtians, that they are called out of darkneſs into a marvellous light. Aſk the evangeliſts, they will tell you, *The Day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us, to give light to them that ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death.* Aſk any, or all the apoſtles, and they will tell you, their commiſſion is, to open the eyes of the people, *and turn them from darkneſs unto light.* But how could the *Jewiſh* people have a *good view and proſpect* or life, and immortality, if their eyes were not opened? How could they be called out of darkneſs, if their ſituation preſented them with a

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good view of an object, which they were now firſt invited to behold? And how could they ſit in the ſhadow of death, if they had been favoured with a good proof of a future ſtate?

"It would be ridiculous to ſay, that they ſat in darkneſs, or that they had not their eyes, merely, becauſe they did not ſee the object in its full proportion, or extent, or had not an exact view of every minute part, and the opportunity of ſurveying it quite round. The ſitting in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death, evidently implies a total want of light, by which the people thus circumſtanced, were to be enlightened; it being impoſſible to expreſs the moſt entire ignorance in more emphatic terms." *

I have made theſe large quotations from this author, containing all his chief texts of ſcripture, and his comments upon them, in his own words, that there might be no complaint of my robbing his arguments of any of their force, for all that he farther ſays on this ſubject, is but mere repetition.

I ſhall now ſhew, that all his reaſoning upon theſe texts is falſe in itſelf, and nothing at all to the purpoſe, as not touching the one great point in queſtion, which is the doctrine or belief of a future ſtate, or the immortality of the ſoul in a life after this.—And this I ſhall do, by making it plain, that not one of theſe texts, nor any other in all the new teſtament, proves, or has the leaſt tendency to prove, that the doctrine or belief of the ſoul's immortality, and a future ſtate, was not known in and thro' every age of the world, before the coming of Chriſt in the fleſh.

This will be ſufficiently done, by ſhewing, that the doctrine of the immortality of the ſoul, or its future exiſtence in ſome kind of happineſs or miſery in another life, is a matter about which theſe texts ſay not a ſyllable, but leave it as untouched as the doctrine of the pre exiſtence of ſouls.

If it be aſked then, What is the great diſcovery, new light and knowledge, declared in theſe texts, as newly

* Pages 4, 5, 6, &c.

newly made known to the world by the goſpel? It is anſwered, that the one thing meant both by the letter and ſpirit of all theſe, and every other the like paſſages of ſcripture, ſpeaking of that myſtery, new light, or knowledge made known by the goſpel, and unknown before, is abſolutely nothing elſe, points at nothing elſe, and has nothing elſe implied in it, but the one whole proceſs of Chriſt in his perſonality, his birth, his life, his ſufferings, his death, his reſurrection and aſcenſion into Heaven. This, and this alone, namely, The whole proceſs of Chriſt, in all theſe important particulars, is the great ſalvation, the great myſtery, the hidden wiſdom of God, kept ſecret from the foundation of the world, and not manifeſted, nor poſſible to be manifeſted, but by Chriſt himſelf entering into, and going thro' all the parts of this proceſs.—Of this proceſs alone it is, that the apoſtles ſpeak, when they declare the myſtery opened in the goſpel, to have been a myſtery kept ſecret ſince the world began; and the reaſon why it was ſo is plain, becauſe it muſt be a ſecret, and continue ſuch, till what was contained in it came into actual exiſtence, and thereby manifeſted itſelf.

Of this proceſs alone, and its wonderful effects, it is that the apoſtles ſpeak, when they glory of the aboliſhment of death, and of life and immortality brought to light through the goſpel: Becauſe it is the goſpel alone, that manifeſts the actual exiſtence of this proceſs of Chriſt in all its parts. Nor do they ever ſpeak of any light, life, or knowledge, as formerly the hidden wiſdom of God, and now made manifeſt to the world, but ſolely that light, that life, and knowledge, which ariſes from ſome one or other, or all the parts of our Saviour's proceſs, as the one only poſſible and actual Redeemer of the world.

That this is, the plain full truth of the matter, That the only thing, diſcovered to the world by the light of the goſpel, is the one whole proceſs of Chriſt, muſt be acknowledged by every conſiderate man, even from the nature of the thing.—For what can

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the myſtery of the Goſpel be, but the myſtery of Chriſt, as a Saviour, made known to the world? And what can the myſtery of Chriſt, as a Saviour made known be, but the manifeſtation of *what* he is in himſelf, in the power of his perſonality, in the efficacy of his birth, in the bleſſed conſequences of his life, his ſufferings, his death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion into Heaven, as our *ſecond Adam*, or father of a new, divine nature, derived into us by his wonderful proceſs in all its parts.

Now as all theſe particulars make up the *whole manifeſtation* of the myſtery opened in the goſpel, ſo there is not in any of theſe, the moſt diſtant *hint* given, that the doctrine of a *future ſtate*, was not as ſoon, as univerſally, and conſtantly known as the fall of man was. Nor do they any more imply, *ſuch ignorance*, than they imply, the fall of man not known till Chriſt came in the fleſh.—Now that which is not taught in, and by the proceſs of Chriſt, cannot be taught by the manifeſtation of the goſpel myſtery. But in all our Saviour's proceſs, there is no poſſibility of making any part of it prove, that the *immortality* of the ſoul, or its *deſtination* to a future life, was not the common belief, of every age from *Adam* to Chriſt.

For this wonderful proceſs of Chriſt, which is the whole myſtery opened in the goſpel, is about quite *another kind* of life in the ſoul, than that which conſiſts in its *bare immortality*. For immortality, conſidered in itſelf, may as well be a curſe as a bleſſing. But this is not the life and immortality that the goſpel boaſts of. It leaves ſuch natural immortality, which belongs as well to devils as well as men, as wholly untouched, as it does the original of the alphabet. And for this reaſon, becauſe the *one knowledge* which the former world wanted, and the Chriſtian world got, is by all the evangeliſts and apoſtles confined to that, which Chriſt, as God and man, was, did, ſuffered, purchaſed, and obtained, in and through the efficacy and merits of his proceſs, till as

a ſecond *Adam*, he was placed at the right hand of God.

It is the living knowledge, the real participation of all theſe parts of our Saviour's proceſs, as a God incarnate, that contains all that life and immortality, all the glad tidings of ſalvation, and light out of darkneſs, made known to the world by Chriſt and his apoſtles. Nor do they ever call the attention of mankind to any other new light or knowledge, but that of ſeeing and knowing, how every part of Chriſt's proceſs had its particular and joint efficacy, to deſtroy the works of the devil, and the power of hell in fallen man.

This was the good news of *life and immortality* brought to light by a glorious goſpel, which ſhewed the whole counſel of God towards fallen men; how they were before the foundation of the world ſeen in Chriſt, *predeſtinated to be made conformable to his image*, who by all that he was, did and ſuffered, from his firſt coming down, to his aſcention into Heaven, was the one, only poſſible means of their partaking again of the divine nature.

Every ſtep of our Saviour's proceſs from firſt to laſt, was only ſo many neceſſary ſteps of our progreſs out of the eternal death of ſin and miſery, into a participation of an heavenly life in Chriſt Jeſus. And in this proceſs is contained all that Chriſtian theology, which makes up the whole doctrine of Chriſt and his apoſtles.

No power of reaſoning, no art of criticiſm, can force one ſingle text of the new teſtament to ſpeak, or ſo much as hint at any other life or immortality but this, *as firſt* made known to the world by the goſpel.—The natural immortality of the ſoul, is no part of its redemption, but belongs to it as it belongs to all angels, whether in Heaven or in hell, and is an immortality no more purchaſed by the incarnation of the ſon of God, than the immortality which belongs to *lucifer* and his angels.—Therefore this cannot be that immortality, which is the gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore nothing

that is ſaid of that immortality, which comes to fallen man only by Jeſus Chriſt, can be the leaſt proof, that the belief of the ſoul's perpetual exiſtence in a future ſtate came firſt, or only by him, and was not always held by every age, from the beginning of the world.

Natural immortality has its full nature in the fallen angels; but the one immortality that comes by Jeſus Chriſt, is the glory of the holy Trinity, dwelling and manifeſting itſelf in the immortal nature of the ſoul.

For this is a certain truth, that all that is divine and God-like in any creature, dwells as a ſupernatural gift or operation of God in it; which may be loſt, as it was in angels, and *Adam*; and can be kept by no other power but that of faith; nor regained, when loſt, but by the return of that ſame faith, and full reſignation to God. So that the natural immortality of angels or men, is only their capacity to receive the never-ending, but always increaſing manifeſtation of divine glory in, and thro' all their natural powers. And this is the one immortality made known, and purchaſed for us through the bleſſed Jeſus, being and doing what he was and did, in our poor immortal nature, that had loſt its God.

But to conſider now the texts of the new teſtament, on which this author has endeavoured to eſtabliſh biſhop *Warburton*'s opinion. The firſt and chief of theſe is that of St. *Paul*; "God hath ſaved us, according to his own purpoſe, and his grace, which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began: But is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel."

Now every word in this paſſage excludes all regard to the natural immortality of the ſoul, and neceſſarily leads and confines us to that one life and immortality, to a life and immortality of the heavenly nature brought forth in our ſouls.—For the life and im-

mortality here granted to us, is expreſsly affirmed to be effected by Chriſt's aboliſhment of death. Therefore as is the death here aboliſhed, ſuch muſt be the life that is brought forth in the ſtead of it.

The death here aboliſhed is not the natural mortality of body or ſoul, but that death, whoſe deſtruction is declared in theſe words of the apoſtle, *Chriſt was manifeſted to deſtroy the works of the devil*: and from that deſtruction comes forth the one true life and immortality, which is an eternal union of righteouſneſs in and with Chriſt, as a principle of a divine life eternally dwelling in us.

To be carnally minded, ſaith the apoſtle, is death, this is the one death that Chriſt is here ſaid to aboliſh; but to be ſpiritually minded is life and peace; and this is the one life and immortality that Chriſt ſets up in the ſtead of death, by making us ſpiritually minded, or as St. *Peter* words it, "partakers of the divine nature, by which we are made children of God, and if children, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt."

Farther, St. *John* ſaith, *This is the record, that God hath given unto us eternal life*; ſurely this is the one immortality brought to light by the goſpel. But to ſhew us what, and wherein this immortal, or eternal life conſiſts, the apoſtle adds, "and this life is in his ſon: He that hath the ſon, hath life, and he that hath not the ſon, hath not life."

Therefore this immortality, or eternal life given unto us of God, not only has nothing in it concerning the natural immortality of ſouls, but is neceſſarily to be underſtood of quite another matter.

For they only can have this eternal life given to them of God, who have the ſon; therefore it has no relation to the natural immortality of ſouls, and they can only have the ſon, of whom it can be truly ſaid, "that Chriſt is of God become wiſdom and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification to them.

As another full proof of all that has been ſaid, it may be added, that the life and immortality brought to light by the goſpel, is purely conditional and only offended

offered to mankind, as a gift of God, upon certain terms. And therefore does not, cannot mean the immortality of the ſoul, or its perpetual natural duration in a future ſtate.

Thus, "God gave his only begotten ſon, that whoſoever believed on him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life." Therefore the immortality of life revealed by the goſpel, is purely conditional, and adventitious to the ſoul, ſuch as may be received, or not received, and conſequently cannot poſſibly be, or mean a natural immortality, for ſuch immortality, it has no power of freely receiving, or not receiving upon terms.

That bleſſing of a heavenly immortality, freely given by God, is nothing elſe but a celeſtial holineſs, purity and perfection brought forth in the ſoul, by its having the eternal WORD and SPIRIT of God again reſtored to, and united with it; called immortality, not becauſe of its eternal duration, but becauſe eternally free from all that, which is death, or the deadly evil of ſin in the ſoul; called alſo ſo, in oppoſition to that natural immortality of devils, and damned ſouls, which tho' never ceaſing, is only an eternal death. So that no argument, from what is ſaid of the life and immortality made known by the goſpel, can be drawn into a proof, that the belief of a future ſtate, was not the general belief of the world before. Becauſe the immortality preached by the goſpel, is a thing quite different from the natural, perpetual duration of the ſoul, and means neither more, nor leſs, than the *glory and perfection of a divine life*, to which *Adam* died the very day that he did eat of the forbidden tree, and which is quickened again, in and by the whole proceſs of Chriſt in our nature.

I come now, to my ſecond propoſition, namely, to ſhew, that the doctrine of a future ſtate, or the immortality of the ſoul, was not deſignedly ſecreted, or induſtriouſly hidden from the eyes of the people of God by the types and figures of the Moſaic diſpen-

ſation.—My reaſons for it are as follow. *Firſt*, becauſe it is highly unworthy of God, to ſuppoſe, that it was, the end of thoſe types and figures, deſignedly to *ſecrete*, or *hide* from the people of God, the knowledge *of any truth*, much leſs the knowledge of a truth, abſolutely *neceſſary*, to the very poſſibility of any ſpiritual relation, or religious communication between God and man, as that of the immortality of the ſoul, muſt be.—For though the Moſaic ſtate, may be juſtly called a *region of darkneſs*, when compared to that *light* which has ariſen from the *proceſs* of Chriſt; yet ſo far as it went, and with regard to the people under it, it was a degree of *light*, and a degree of *life*: it was *ſome progreſs* in victory over death, it was *ſome opening* of divine light, an help to ſuch kind of knowledge, as could be had in ſuch a ſtate, as was only formed to ſupport, and keep up a faith, and hope, and expectation of ſuch a redemption to come, as had been promiſed from the beginning of the world, but could have no open manifeſtation, till its *own exiſtence* manifeſted itſelf.—It is therefore a groſs miſtaking the *whole nature* of the law, to conſider its types and figures as *deſignedly* hiding any thing from man.—Their deſign was quite the contrary, namely, to convey *new* light and *farther* information. And though they may be ſaid to be a *ſhadowy*, and imperfect repreſentation, yet its whole intent is, to give ſome knowledge of the ſubſtance; and by its ſigns to make the things to come more expected, than they would have been without ſuch types and figures.

Bp. *Warburton*, ſpeaking of typical repreſentation, ſaith, *it neceſſarily implies the throwing a thing into ſhade*, or *ſecreting* it from *vulgar knowledge*.

Typical repreſentation, in the *law*, is not, cannot be the *throwing a thing into ſhade*, or *ſecreting* it from *vulgar knowledge*. For this ſuppoſes the thing typified to have been already *in exiſtence*, or it could not be *thrown* into ſhade. But this hath no place in the Moſaic types and figures; they are not the putting any

any thing *already exiſtent*, under a cover, but are a *degree* of light caſt upon ſuch a matter, as had *never ſhewn* itſelf, and which could therefore only be typically pointed at, till it came into actual exiſtence.

Again, that typical repreſentation does not *neceſſarily imply, the throwing a thing into ſhade, and ſecreting it from vulgar knowledge*, is plain from hence.—Baptiſm, and bread and wine in the ſacrament, are merely corporeal types and figures of ſpiritual things; but if it was *neceſſarily eſſential* to typical repreſentation, *to throw things into ſhade, and ſecrete them from vulgar knowledge*, it would follow, that theſe two ſacraments could have no other end, but to caſt the ſpiritual things of the goſpel into ſhade, and ſecrete them from vulgar knowledge. Type, figure, and human language, with regard to ſpiritual things, have the ſame kind of imperfection, though not in the ſame *degree*; but yet teaching and informing, is the deſign of both of them.

Of the Moſaic types therefore it may juſtly be affirmed, that they were ſo far from *deſignedly* hiding, or covering any truths from man, that their whole intent was, to *uncover*, and make *leſs hidden* ſuch things as at that time, could not be ſeen, or known as they were in themſelves.—Nothing could poſſibly manifeſt the nature, power, and efficacy of Chriſt's proceſs (the one thing typified) but its own real nature, come into *actual exiſtence in all its parts*.—Therefore through every age of the world, from the firſt promiſe made to *Adam*, of *a ſeed of the women to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent*, to that time, all the religious goodneſs of mankind conſiſted in their *walking before God* in an *implicit faith* of a full redemption, made known to them under repreſentation of a ſeed of the woman, overcoming the miſchief that the ſerpent had done to them. And through this *faith alone* it was, that all the holy men of old had their righteouſneſs, and peace, and union with God. And *God was not aſhamed to be called their God, inaſmuch as having received the promiſes, and ſeen them afar off, and embraced them, they confeſſed*

confeſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth, deſired a heavenly country, and through faith looked for a city whoſe builder and maker is God.

Hence are the following great truths undeniably evident, (1) That *faith in Chriſt*, has always been, and always muſt be, the *only* ground of ſalvation poſſible to man, in any age of the world. (2) That *this faith* itſelf, and all its power and efficacy, has always, as fully proceeded from Chriſt alone, as the faith of thoſe who believed in him, when come in the fleſh. For as then Chriſt truly ſaid of himſelf, *without me ye can do nothing*, ſo it was equally true of the firſt promiſed ſeed of the woman, *that without it*, nothing good could have been done by fallen man.

Therefore, (3) the covenant of God with all mankind through Chriſt, is a living, operative covenant of life and immortality, not firſt begun, or firſt made known, when Chriſt was on earth, and died for us, but a covenant as antient as our firſt parents, as univerſal as their offſpring. And what the apoſtle ſaith, that *God was in Chriſt Jeſus reconciling the world unto himſelf*, tells us a truth and goodneſs of God, that extends itſelf to every nation, people, and language, that ever hath been, or ever ſhall be upon the face of the earth.

And as an implicit faith in a promiſed redemption was all the religion of the old world; all that could be done by the infinite wiſdom of God, was according to the fitneſs of times, ſeaſons and occaſions (only known to himſelf) to give forth ſuch typical and prophetic intimations of this redemption, as ſhould more and more confirm their faith, and prepare them to ſee, that the whole proceſs of Chriſt, when finiſhed, was that very redemption firſt promiſed to all the world, in the promiſe made to the common father of mankind, through ſucceeding ages kept conſtantly in view, by a train of types and propheſies.

And as the hiſtory and ritual of *Moſes*, could not poſſibly deſign to take away knowledge of any di-

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vine truths from the people of God, ſo leaſt of all could they deſignedly hide, from them a belief of the natural immortality of the ſoul: A truth abſolutely neceſſary and eſſential to any ſpiritual relation, or religious communion between God and man.

And indeed, *Moſes* is as free from any ſuch *deſign*, as the apoſtles themſelves.

For to ſay, that the types of the law have deſignedly hid, from the people of God, all ſenſe of the immortality of the ſoul, is as falſe, as bold, and extravagant, as to ſay the ſame thing of the goſpel.

For in the new teſtament, not a word is to be found, that expreſsly affirms the ſoul to be naturally immortal; in this reſpect the law and the goſpel are equally ſilent; and yet neither of them ſecrete, or hide it from the people of God, but both fully prove, and with the ſame kind of proof, the abſolute neceſſity of believing it.

For as in the goſpel it is never expreſsly aſſerted, and yet is fully proved, becauſe unavoidably ſuppoſed, and neceſſarily implied in and by the open, and plain doctrines of the goſpel: ſo it is with the books of *Moſes*; they never expreſsly affirm the natural immortality of the ſoul, and yet give one, and the ſame full proof of it, as the goſpel doth. Becauſe the expreſs doctrines of every diſpenſation of God, from *Adam* to Chriſt, openly teach doctrines, which not by inference, but in the plain nature of the thing, unavoidably require, and neceſſarily imply, the immortality of the ſoul, and the common belief of it in all ages of the church before the coming of Chriſt.

The obtaining an union with Chriſt, is the one life and immortality brought to light by the goſpel; but this immortality unavoidably requires, and neceſſarily implies the perpetual duration of the ſoul's natural life. For nothing but an ever-enduring creature, is capable of enjoying an everlaſting giſt.

Therefore the goſpel, though never once expreſsly aſſerting, yet continually demonſtrates the natural immortality of the ſoul.

And this is the whole truth, with regard to the Moſaic hiſtory and types; they hide it, in the ſame manner

manner as the goſpel hides it, that is, not at all; and they fully prove it in the ſame manner, as the goſpel proves it, by doctrines which neceſſarily require, and abſolutely imply it, in the firſt conception of them.

For the hiſtory of the creation and the fall of man, contains an expreſs covenant of a redemption, promiſed to *Adam* and his fallen poſterity, in which a ſeed of the woman ſhould do away the evil, which the ſerpent, had brought into the human nature, that is, ſhould reſtore the firſt, loſt, heavenly life to mankind.

But this covenant, and the immediate benefit of it, could neither be wanted nor received, but by immortal creatures, that believed themſelves to have an immortality, which had loſt that glory and perfection which belonged to it at the firſt. Nor could ſuch immortal creatures have any power of entering into this covenant any other way, than by an implicit faith in God. For it was a covenant of redemption, or return of their firſt glory, without the leaſt intimation of the time, or age, when, or the means, or manner, how, it was to be brought to paſs. Therefore ſuch a covenant, and ſuch a faith, in the very firſt conception of them, without the leaſt reaſoning or deduction, abſolutely imply, and neceſſarily require a full belief of a future ſtate.

And how could God better keep up a full ſenſe of it, or more fix it in the hearts of men, than by placing, and fixing all their faith, and comfort, in a redemption certainly to come upon all the world, which yet might not come, till half the world was dead?

Or how could mankind poſſibly give into this faith, had they had the leaſt doubt of the certainty of a life to come? For their faith in ſuch an expected redemption, could not be either more or leſs, than their faith in a future ſtate.

Therefore God's requiring this faith of them, was in the higheſt degree his requiring them to believe the ever-enduring life of their ſouls. Conſequently, in the firſt revelation of God to man, life and immortality,

tality, as it means an ever-enduring ſtate of the ſoul, was as fully, and in the ſame degree brought to light, as in the revelation of the goſpel.

In the goſpel it is proved, becauſe an immortality of a heavenly life is made known, purchaſed and given by Chriſt, which neceſſarily implies an immortal nature in man, or he could not partake of it.

In the firſt revelation, it is equally proved, becauſe a *redemption to come*, that was to be obtained by an implicit faith, without any knowledge of the time when it was to appear, whether before or after many generations of men were dead and gone, neceſſarily implies a full belief of a ſtate belonging to man, that is beyond time, and the death of the body.

This proof of the natural immortality of the ſoul, thus inſeparable from the firſt revelation of God, is ſo ſtrong, that nothing need, or hardly can be added to it. For how could God more fully aſſert the immortality of our nature, than by requiring our faith in ſuch a redemption? Or how could man more ſtrongly declare his full belief of, ſuch immortality, than by his faith in a redemption that had nothing to do with time, or the life, or death of the body in this preſent world?

Again, The murder, or martyrdom of *Abel*, and the tranſlation of *Enoch* into heaven, both recorded for the inſtruction of the people in this very point, are two examples, and firſt fruits of the redemption promiſed to *Adam*, and all mankind; two invincible proofs, that this firſt covenant was a covenant of life and immortality, confirmed to mankind by facts ſtrong and convincing, like thoſe of Chriſt's reſurrection and aſcenſion.

For immediately after a covenant of redemption was made, the firſt good man after it, in the very beginning of the world, and the beginning of his own life, after his firſt act of divine worſhip, and as ſoon as God had declared his good pleaſure in it, was ſlaughtered like a beaſt.

Now

Now can there be a fuller demonſtration, that the covenant of redemption was for a life and immortality in future ſtate? Otherwiſe the firſt good man in the world loſt all the benefit of God's covenant, merely becauſe he was good; merely through the devotion that he ſhewed towards God, and the favour which God ſhewed towards him.

Therefore either *Abel*'s blood cries aloud the abſolute certainty of a future ſtate, or *Abel* muſt be ſaid to have been undone, ruined, and deprived of all good, purely becauſe of a friendſhip diſcovered between God and him.

This fact therefore, recorded by the ſpirit of God aſſures all the Moſaic generations, that another life belonged to *Abel* and to them, beſides that which *Abel* loſt by his death. Does it not as directly, declare this, as when Chriſt ſaid, his *kingdom was not of this world?* Does it not ſay the ſame thing, as when Chriſt ſaid to his diſciples, *fear not them that can only kill the body?* The ſame thing, as the voice from heaven, which cried, *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord?*

Again, Another proof of the ſame force, is the tranſlation of *Enoch*. God ſaith by *Moſes*, *Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him.* Now, could any the moſt expreſſive form of words, have told the antient world with more certainty than this fact does, that God's covenant with man, was for a kingdom of heaven?

Our bleſſed Lord, when departing out of this world, ſaith to his diſciples, *I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be alſo.* And does not *Enoch*'s tranſlation ſay as much, as if he had been ſent again by God to ſay, *God has taken me from this world into heaven, to make it manifeſt to you, that where I am gone, there are ye to come alſo.*

Behold here the adorable goodneſs of God to the firſt and ſucceeding ages of the world! Theſe two great articles of faith, which are now the comfort of the Chriſtian world, namely, victory over death, and aſcenſion into heaven, had even then the utmoſt and moſt convincing proof given to them by God.

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The old world, from the firſt man, were all in a covenant of redemption.—Life and immortality was both by doctrine and example, made known to them, and nothing remained as a myſtery or wiſdom hidden in God, to be revealed in the laſt times, but that one thing which could not be manifeſted, till by its own actual exiſtence it manifeſted itſelf, namely, the wonderful, proceſs of Chriſt in our fallen nature. By which proceſs alone it was, that all the faith as well before as after Chriſt, had all its efficacy.

Hence it is, that the faith and religion of the firſt world was in ſubſtance, the very Chriſtian faith and Chriſtian religion, one and the ſame way, and power of ſalvation; which oneneſs conſiſts in this, that *Chriſt, the ſame yeſterday, to day and for ever*, was the ſame mediator between God and man from the beginning of the world, one and the ſame power of life and ſalvation to murdered *Abel*, as to martyr'd *Stephen*.

This faith from this original, was their peace with God through Jeſus Chriſt, the very ſame faith of which Chriſt ſaith, *He that believeth in me ſhall never die.* The ſame faith of which he again ſaith, *If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink; he that believeth in me, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water.*

That this was the catholic, ſaving faith, common to all the patriarchal ages, we are aſſured by the ſpirit of God in the epiſtles to the *Corinthians* and *Hebrews*, telling in expreſs words, "They did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink, for they drank of that ſpiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Chriſt."

Are we not told, that very ſame thing of the patriarchal generations, which Chriſt ſaid to thoſe that believed in him, that by eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood, they have eternal life?

In the eleventh chapter of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, the ſame ſpirit, ſpeaking of the patriarchal ages, ſaith, "All theſe died in faith, not having received the promiſes, but having ſeen them afar off, and were perſwaded of them, and embraced them, and con-

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feſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth,—who deſired a better country, that is, an heavenly.

Bp. *Warburton* is ſo out of humour with this whole chapter, thus full of patriarchal light and glory, that he gives it the heatheniſh name of the *Palladium of the cauſe*, which he had undertaken to demoliſh. And he accordingly attacks it with a number of critical inventions, that may as truly be called heatheniſh; for they are in direct oppoſition to all Chriſtian theology.

He will have it, that the faith ſet forth in this whole chapter, is concerning a faith in the abſtract, and not a ſpecific faith in the Meſſiah. An invention, as little grounded in the goſpel, as goodneſs in the abſtract, in oppoſition to ſpecific goodneſs. Goodneſs in the abſtract, if it hath any meaning, is all goodneſs, and therefore muſt have every ſpecies of goodneſs in it; ſo faith in the abſtract, if it hath any meaning, is all faith, and therefore muſt have every ſpecies of faith in it.

His firſt reaſon, why this whole chapter is concerning a faith in the abſtract, and not a faith in the Meſſiah, is taken from that definition of faith. "The ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen."

And yet this very definition, if it had been intended, to give the moſt diſtinct idea of the nature of faith in the Meſſiah, could not have been better expreſſed, for there is every thing in it, that can fully ſet forth that very faith. For if faith in a Meſſiah to come, muſt be a faith in things hoped for, and a reliance upon the certainty of things not ſeen, if this, and nothing but this, can be a true faith in a Meſſiah to come, how could it be more directly pointed at, than by making it to be *the ſubſtance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not ſeen?*

For in this definition, not only the true object, but the true efficacy of faith in the Meſſiah is ſet forth, in that it is made to be ſuch a real foretaſte, and participation of things hoped for, and not ſeen, as

as is juſtly called, the very ſubſtance and evidence of them.

Again, the doctor appeals to the following words, as proof, that the faith deſcribed in this chapter, is not a faith in the Meſſiah, "He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of all thoſe that diligently ſeek him." Which words contain neither more nor leſs, than if it had been ſaid, "He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is a fulfiller of his promiſes to all thoſe that truly believe in him, and them: For God cannot be conſidered as a rewarder of mankind, in any other ſenſe, than as he is a fulfiller of his promiſes made to mankind in the covenant of a Meſſiah. For God could not give, nor man receive any rewards or bleſſings, but in and through the one Mediator. Therefore to believe in God, as a rewarder, and bleſſer, is the very truth, and reality of a right faith in the Meſſiah.

The doctor has another proof, which he ſays, puts the matter out of all doubt. In this chapter it is ſaid, by faith *Rahab* the harlot eſcaped, by faith the *Iſraelites* paſſed through the Red Sea, by faith the walls of *Jericho* fell down. "But was any of this, a faith in Jeſus the Meſſiah?"

Now not to rob this argumentation of any of its ſtrength, it muſt be allowed to proceed thus.

Joſhua's faith could not be in the Meſſiah, or the promiſes of God made to his forefathers. But why ſo? Becauſe by his faith the walls of *Jericho* fell down.

Juſt as theologically argued, as if it had been ſaid, *Abel*'s faith could not be a faith in the ſeed of the woman, promiſed to his parents; becauſe by his faith "he offered unto God a more acceptable ſacrifice than *Cain*."

Enoch's faith could not be in a Meſſiah to come, becauſe by his faith he was taken up to God.

Abraham's faith could not be in the Meſſiah, becauſe by his faith, "He ſojourned in a ſtrange country, choſe to dwell in tents, and looked for a

city that hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God." His faith could not be in a Meſſiah to come, becauſe by his *faith he offered up* Iſaac, *his only begotten ſon.*

Having ſet the doctor's argument in its beſt light, no more need be ſaid about the worth of it.

At laſt comes his invincible argument, which if it was as ſtrong, as he gives out, all that went before might have been ſpared.

" To evince it impoſſible, ſays the doctor, that faith in the Meſſiah, ſhould be meant by the faith in this chapter, the apoſtle expreſsly ſaith, that all thoſe, to whom he aſſigns this faith, had not received the promiſes; therefore they could not have faith in that, which was never propoſed to their faith. For how ſhould they believe on him, of whom they had not heard ?"

Now if this argument has any good logic in it, it muſt follow, that no one, whether patriarch or prophet, before, or after the law, ever had, or could have faith in the Meſſiah, for all who died before the birth of Chriſt, muſt have died without receiving the promiſes, which were then firſt received, when good old *Simeon* could ſing, " Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation."

But St. *Paul*, ſpeaking to the *Jews*, ſaith, " Behold, we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promiſe, which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the ſame to us their children."

Here, by the ſpirit of God himſelf, is made known to us, the true difference between receiving, and not receiving the promiſes. The fathers, who could only ſee them afar off, are thoſe who died without receiving the promiſes, that is, without receiving the things promiſed. And their children who lived to ſee the promiſes fulfilled, are they that received the promiſes, that is, the things promiſed.

Farther, the ſpirit of God ſaith, " all theſe died in the faith, not having received the promiſes."

But how could they die in this faith ? It was for this only reaſon, becauſe they had not received the promiſes,

promiſes, that is, the things promiſed. For if they had, they could not have died in faith, but in the enjoyment of things promiſed.

The doctor therefore has unluckily pitched upon that, as an argument againſt the poſſibility of their faith in the Meſſiah, which is the very reaſon, why they did die in the faith of him. For the holy ſpirit ſaith, they all died in the faith; and then the reaſon is added, why they did, namely, becauſe not having received the promiſes; therefore their not having received the promiſes, is the reaſon why they died in the faith of them. And their faith had this foundation, becauſe they had ſeen the things promiſed, as afar off, that is, long after their own deaths, and therefore to be fulfilled, or made good in a future life. Conſequently, their faith was in a redemption to come in a life after this; which ſurely may be affirmed to be a true faith in the promiſed Meſſiah, or in all that, which had been promiſed, from the firſt joyful notice, which God gave of him, *in a ſeed of the woman to bruiſe the head of the ſerpent.* Which in goſpel language is called, *deſtroying the works of the devil*, and bringing all that to life again, which died in *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion.

It is added of theſe holy men dying in the faith of promiſes *ſeen afar off*, that they *were perſwaded of them, and embraced them, and confeſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth*; *now they that ſay ſuch things, plainly declare, that they ſeek a better country, that is, an heavenly.*

What an extravagance is it therefore in the learned doctor, to ſay, *How ſhould they believe in him of whom they have not heard*; as in the leaſt degree applicable to thoſe ſaints of the old world? For their faith was in promiſes made to them, but not fulfilled before their deaths, which they beholding as afar off, died in the fulleſt faith and expectation of a bleſſed life and heavenly country, in virtue of them. Therefore they believed in *that*, of which they had heard, they knew what it was that they believed, *namely*, a re-

demption from all the evil of their pilgrimage on earth, to a life in heaven.

Our bleſſed Lord ſaid to the *Jews*, *Your father* Abraham *rejoiced to ſee my day, and he ſaw it, and was glad.* Surely then *Abraham* had faith in the Meſſiah, and yet he is numbered by the apoſtle amongſt thoſe, who died not having received the promiſes.

But now, though *Abraham*'s rejoicing at the ſight of that day, was a ſufficient proof, that his faith was in the Meſſiah, yet the *implicit* faith of the more antient, patriarchal world in *that*, which they had not ſeen, as *Abraham* had, was as *right* a faith in the Meſſiah, as *Abraham*'s was. This point is determined, in the following words of Chriſt. *Thomas, becauſe thou haſt ſeen me, thou haſt believed; bleſſed are they, which have not ſeen, and yet have believed.*

This, and this alone, is the only real difference between the religion of the faithful before, and after Chriſt. *Before Chriſt*, the living faith, was in a Meſſiah to come in ſome wonderful, but unknown way. By this faith, they ſtood under the bleſſed power of the *ſeed of the woman*, and from generation to generation were kept in the one true covenant of life, and union with God.

After Chriſt, the ſame living faith, rejoiced in a Meſſiah made known by a miraculous birth, in the fallen human nature, redeeming it out of every evil of life, of death, of ſin and hell, till it was placed, as God and man in one perſon, at the right hand of God in heaven.

Now when in proceſs of time, the covenant of life between God and man, had loſt much of its effect, and the people of God had greatly fallen away from the faith and piety of the firſt patriarchs, (perhaps not more remarkably than the Chriſtian world is fallen from the truth and faith of the apoſtolic ages) it pleaſed God by *Moſes*, to introduce the deſcendents of the patriarchs into a new *covenant of care, and protection over them.*

Which covenant was not a *new progreſſive ſtate* of *that* firſt one true religion, that alone unites God and fallen

fallen man, nor given for its own ſake, or becauſe of any intrinſic goodneſs in its waſhings and purifications, but granted to the *hardneſs of their hearts*, as a *temporal means* of keeping a fallen people from falling farther under the blindneſs and vanity of their earthly minds.

The firſt covenant was ſo perfect that nothing could be added to it, but the manifeſtation of that which was promiſed in it. It was a promiſe of life and redemption to mankind, to be fulfilled in and by the ſeed of the woman. Now the promiſe, and the fulfilling of it, are not (as in human matters) two *diſtant*, *ſeparate* things, that begin at different times, nor can the one ever be without the other. They both began together, and muſt exiſt together. The end, that is, the fulfilling, grows out of the beginning goes along with it, and has all its efficacy from it; and the beginning, that is, the promiſe, is only ſo much of the end.

That which Chriſt did, ſuffered, and obtained in our fleſh, calling all to turn to God, to deny themſelves, to enter into the ſtricteſt union with him, giving all divine graces, and yet only *according to their faith in him*; that very ſame, the ſeed of the woman from the beginning was alway doing yet ſolely *according to their faith in it*.

The loſs of *this faith* in the firſt ages of mankind, gave birth to that which is called the *heathen*, or *rational* world; for they both began together, and brought forth a race of people, full of blindneſs, wickedneſs, and idolatry. For ſo far as they departed from faith, ſo far they fell from God, under the dominion and government of their reaſon, paſſions, and appetites. And thence began the kingdom of this world, and the wiſdom of this world, which ever muſt have full power over every man, as ſoon as he ceaſes to live by faith.

Reaſoning inſtead of faith, brought about the firſt dreadful change in human nature, no leſs than a real death to God. And nothing but faith inſtead of reaſoning, can give any one fallen man power to become

become again a ſon of God. Now to the end of the world, this will be the unalterable difference between faith in God, and reaſoning about the things of God; they can never change their place, or effects; that which they did to the firſt man, that they will do to the laſt.

It *matters* not, how much the *revelations* and precepts of God are increaſed, ſince the firſt ſingle command given to *Adam*; for no more is offered to our reaſoning faculty by the whole bible, than by that ſingle precept. And the benefit of the whole bible is loſt to us, as ſoon as we reaſon about the nature and neceſſity of its commands, juſt as the benefit of that firſt precept was loſt in the ſame way.

Hath God indeed ſaid, ye ſhall not eat of every tree in the garden? This was the firſt eſſay, or beginning of reaſoning with God. What it was, and did then, that it will always be, and do. Its nature, and fruits will never be any other, to the end of the world. And though in theſe laſt ages, it hath paſſed through all ſchools of quibbling, and is arrived at its utmoſt height of art, and preciſion of argument, yet as to divine matters, it ſtands juſt where it ſtood, when it firſt learnt that logic from the ſerpent, which improved the underſtanding of *Eve*. And at this day, it can ſee no deeper into the things of God; give no better judgment about them, than *that* concluſion it at firſt made, that *death* could not be in the tree, which was *ſo good for food, ſo pleaſant to behold, and to be deſired for knowledge*.

In ſhort, theſe two, faith and reaſoning, have, and always will divide all mankind, from the beginning to the end of the world, into two ſorts of men.

The faithful, through every age, are of the ſeed of the woman, the children of God, and heirs of redemption.

The reaſoners, are of the ſeed of the ſerpent, they are the Heathens through every age, and heirs of that confuſion, which happened to the firſt builders of the tower of *Babel*.

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To live by faith, is to be in covenant with God; to live by reaſoning, is to be in compact with ourſelves, with our own vanity, and blindneſs.

To live by faith, is to live with God in the ſpirit and power of prayer, in ſelf-denial, in contempt of the world, in divine love, in foretaſtes of the world to come, in humility, in patience, long-ſuffering, obedience, reſignation, abſolute dependence upon God, with all that is temporal and earthly under their feet.

To live by reaſoning, is to be a prey of the old ſerpent, eating duſt with him, groveling in the mire of all earthly paſſions, devoured with pride, imbittered with envy, tools and dupes to ourſelves, toſſed up with falſe hopes, caſt down with vain fears, ſlaves to all the good and evil things of this world, to day elated with learned praiſe, to-morrow dejected at the loſs of it; yet jogging on year after year, defining words and ideas, diſſecting doctrines and opinions, ſetting all arguments and all objections upon their beſt legs, ſifting and refining all notions, conjectures, and criticiſms, till death puts the ſame full end to *all the wonders* of the ideal fabric, that the cleanſing broom does to the wonders of the ſpider's web, ſo artfully ſpun at the expence of its own vitals.

This is the unalterable difference between a life of *faith*, and a life of *reaſoning* in the things of God; the former is from God, works with God, and therefore all things are poſſible to it; the latter is from the ſerpent, and therefore vain opinions, falſe judgments, errors and deluſions are inſeparable from it.

Every ſcholar, every diſputer of this world, nay, every man, has been where *Eve* was, and has done what ſhe did, when ſhe ſought for *wiſdom* that did *not come* from God. All libraries are a full proof of the remaining power of the firſt ſinful thirſt after it: they are full of a knowledge that comes not from God, but from the firſt foundation of ſubtlety that opened her eyes. For as there cannot be any goodneſs in man, but ſo far as the divine goodneſs works in him,

ſo

ſo there cannot be any divine truth, or knowledge in man, but ſo far as God's truth and knowledge works in him?

Indeed nothing but the one ſpirit of Chriſt, living and working in man, from the beginning to the end of the world, can poſſibly be the ſource, of any goodneſs, holineſs, or redemption of man.

The ſcriptures abound with proof of this. What can be more deciſive than the following words? *If any man hath not the ſpirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.—If Chriſt be not in you, ye are reprobates.* And muſt not this be equally true of every man in the world? As true of all men in the patriarchal as in the goſpel ages? *If any man*, ſays the apoſtle, therefore no regard had to time or place, but where there is *any man*, there this truth is affirmed of him by the apoſtle, that unleſs he hath the ſpirit of Chriſt he is none of his, but is a reprobate. But if none can be Chriſt's, but becauſe they have his ſpirit living in them, and none can be God's, but becauſe they are Chriſt's, it follows that if Chriſt was not the ſpirit and power of *that* firſt, univerſal covenant made by God with fallen *Adam*, if he was not that which was meant by the *ſeed of the woman*, if his ſpirit was not from that time the real bruiſer of the ſerpent's head, both *Adam*, and all his poſterity, for much more than three thouſand years lived and died mere reprobates, and that, by an unavoidable neceſſity, becauſe they had not the ſpirit of Chriſt living in them.

And now, my lord, I think I have ſufficiently proved not only my two propoſitions, but alſo that the firſt covenant with *Adam*, by the ſeed of the woman, was the one Chriſtian means of ſalvation, ſo wonderfully manifeſted by the whole proceſs of Chriſt revealed in the goſpel. Therefore it is a truth of the utmoſt certainty, that from the beginning of the world to the end of it, there never was, nor ever will be any more, or any other, but one and the ſame true religion of the goſpel, which began with *Adam* and *Eve* through Jeſus Chriſt, the one mediator and reconciler of God to man, who was as certainly

tainly the life, ſtrength, and ſalvation of the faithful in the old world, as he was in after times, when the ſon of the Virgin *Mary*, *the way*, *the truth*, *and the life*, to all that have faith in him.

And indeed a plurality of religions, or means of ſalvation, is as groſs an imagination as a plurality of Gods, and can ſubſiſt upon no other foundation.

A better religion neceſſarily ſuppoſes a better God, and a change in religion a change in that God, that makes it.—A partial God, with-holding the *one true power* of ſalvation, till the laſt ages of the world, is as atheiſtical as *Epicurus*'s God.

In ſundry times, and in divers manners, it may pleaſe the wiſdom of God, to vary that which is only an outward help to the truth of religion; but the inward ſpirit and truth of ſalvation, is as unvariable as God himſelf.

The law therefore of *Moſes*, as conſiſting of carnal ordinances, not only *makes nothing perfect*, but brings nothing new into the one covenant of redemption, but was only a temporary, proviſional help, *added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the promiſed ſeed ſhould come*; that is, till the whole proceſs of Chriſt, ſhould in its laſt and higheſt degree of evidence manifeſt itſelf in all its parts.

This law then no more belonged to the *true religion* of the old teſtament, than of the new, neither did it ever ſtand *between* theſe two diſpenſations, as in their ſtead. No: It was merely on the *outſide* of both, had only a temporary, relation to the true religion, either before or after Chriſt, but was no more a *part*, or *inſtead* of them *for a time*, than the hand *that* ſtands by the road, directing the traveller, is itſelf a part of the road, or inſtead of it.

Now though the reaſon of man, ought not to pretend to fathom all the depths of divine wiſdom, in the whole of this *additional covenant*, yet two ends of it, are apparent.

Firſt, to bring this corrupted people of *Iſrael* into a new ſtate of ſuch obſervances, as might preſerve them from the groſs ſuperſtitions and idolatries, to which

which they were too much inclined. And this, by a *ritual* of ſuch condeſcenſions to their carnal minds, as might nevertheleſs be a ſchool of reſtraints and diſcipline, full of ſuch purifications, types, and figures, as gave much ſpiritual light and inſtruction, both backwards and forwards. Backwards, as truly ſignificative of their fallen ſtate, daily memorials of their loſt purity and perfection: *Forwards*, as variouſly pointing at *that promiſed* victory over the ſerpent, which had been the conſtant faith and hope of their forefathers.

Secondly, That by a theocracy added to this ritual, which ſhewed itſelf in a covenant of continual *care and protection*, openly bleſſing their obedience, and puniſhing their rebellion, and working all kinds of miracles in the overthrow of their enemies, not only they themſelves, but all the reſt of the world, might be forced to ſee and know, that there was no God, that had all power in heaven and on earth, but the one God of *Iſrael*.

As to the *Iſraelites* themſelves, this temporal covenant, was a great inſtance of God's goodneſs towards them. For they were thus called out of idolatry, ſeparated from the reſt of the world, built into an holy church of God, put under a moſt amazing theocracy, indulged for a time with a ritual of carnal inſtitutions, becauſe of the hardneſs of their hearts, which ritual was full of every inſtruction by doctrines, types, figures and miracles, all ſhewing in the ſtrongeſt manner, that they were to be heirs of the heavenly promiſes made to their forefathers.

And as to the reſt of the world, no particular meſſage, or meſſenger, though new riſen from the dead, proclaim to them in ſo powerful a manner, the vanity of their idols, the knowledge of the one true God of all the world, as this remarkable body of people ſet up in the midſt of the world did. So that the law, though nothing but a temporal covenant of *outward care and protection*, was not only moſt divinely contrived to preſerve the faith of the firſt holy patriarchs, and guide them to the time and manner of re-

receiving the promiſes made to their fathers, but it was all mercy to the reſt of the world, being no leſs than one continual, daily, miraculous call to them, to receive bleſſing and protection, life and ſalvation in the knowledge and worſhip of the one true God of heaven and earth.

Now when the children of the Patriarchs, were to be entered into this new covenant, the utmoſt care was taken by the ſpirit of God, that to eyes that could ſee, and ears that could hear, enough ſhould be ſhewn and ſaid, to prevent all *carnal atheiſm* to temporal and outward things, and bring forth a ſpiritual *Iſrael*, full of that faith and piety, in which their holy anceſtors, as pilgrims on earth, had lived and died devoted to God, in hope of everlaſting redemption.

To this end, *Moſes*, though bringing them, under a ritual of bodily waſhings and purifications, yet that they might uſe them only as outward confeſſions and memorials of an inward ſpiritual pollution, and as types and figures of their being to be delivered from it; is led by the inſpiration of God, not only to inſert in the books of the law, the moſt ſublime doctrines and heavenly precepts of patriarchal holineſs, but to lay before them, for their daily inſtruction, a hiſtory of the moſt deep, and affecting truths: Truths that had every thing in them fitted to awaken, and keep up that ſtrong hope of an eternal redemption, under the power of which, the holy Patriarchs had overlooked every thing in time for the ſake of eternity.

I mean, the moſt wonderful hiſtory of the creation and curſe of this world, of the high origin of man, and his dreadful fall from it, his redemption, and covenant of life reſtored in a ſeed of the woman, the lives and deaths of the holy Patriarchs, their patience under all ſufferings, their contempt of worldly advantages; their heavenly viſions, revelations and ſpeeches from the inviſible God, keeping them thereby in an holy intercourſe with the *inviſible world*, full of faith and hope of the good things of eternity.

To mention one or two of those great doctrines of *Moses*, which set forth the original perfection and heavenly nature of man.

God said, *Let us make man in our own image and likeness*. Is not this as high, a doctrine of *immortality*, does it not give the same instruction, raise the same hope, and call for all the same elevation of the heart to God, as when St *John* saith, *Beloved, it does not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be* LIKE *him?* Just the same truth, and fitted to have the same effects, as when *Moses* said, God made man in his own LIKENESS.

St. *Paul* says, *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself*. A comfortable doctrine indeed, and full of hope of immortality; yet only the same comfort, and hope of immortality which had been openly preached by *Moses*.

When *Moses* bringeth in the deity, as saying, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*; he preaches *that* very same gospel, and in the same manner, which the apostle did. For his words plainly teach, *that God was in the seed of the woman reconciling the world unto himself*, as when St. *Paul* says, *that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself*; the difference is nothing else, but in two different names given to our Redeemer.

Now though *Moses* was the first *recorder* of the gospel salvation in a written book, yet was he not the first *preacher* of it. For it was proclaimed in *Adam's* day, from heaven, as the birth of Christ in the flesh, in the days of *Herod*. For when God said, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*, the same good tidings of salvation was *proclaimed from heaven* by God himself, as when the angel said to the shepherds, *Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*.

But how can we know this? Only by God's own teaching. For nothing can be truly known of God by the creature, but that which God makes known of himself.—So far as God operates in the creature, and manifests himself in it, so far it truly knows, and

is taught of God.—Any other knowledge of God, however learned, high, or deep it may pretend to be, is as vain and ſpurious, as *that Goodneſs*, which proceeds from ſomething elſe, than God's good ſpirit living in us.

Genius, parts, and literature, however ſet forth with wit and rhetoric, have no affinity with divine knowledge; they can no more give it, than the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, can generate humility and purity of heart. Theſe accompliſhments live, and act in a ſphere of their own, and have no more power of taking to themſelves, any living knowledge of God, than the art of painting to the life, can give the power of *creating* life.

The blindneſs, and follies which have overrun both the antient and modern world in matters of religion, are a full proof of the capital doctrine of divine revelation, *namely*, that man (now the defaced image of God) is ſo miſerably changed and fallen from his firſt created ſtate, that no hing leſs than a new birth, can bring him again into the region of divine *truth*.

And hence it is, that though religion has its deepeſt ground in the nature of man, though God be *eſſentially*, preſent in the ſouls of all men, yet from the fall of *Adam*, to the end of the world, it will be an immutable truth, that *ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth* unto divine knowledge: and none but the ſimple of heart, *the poor in ſpirit*, or the real followers of Chriſt can find it.

But it is time to have done. I ſhall only trouble your lordſhip with the few following remarks.—— Dr. *Warburton* ſays, "He has proved that the doctrine of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments is not to be *found in*, nor did make a *part* of the Moſaic diſpenſation." * The Moſaic diſpenſation means nothing elſe, but a *temporary* ritual, and a *temporary* theocracy of worldly bleſſings, and curſes to ſupport it. Theſe are its fixed bounds within which it is confined.—Therefore, to prove that a ſtate *beyond*

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* *D. L.* Vol. II. page 474.

this world, was not to be *found in*, nor did make a *part* of a ſtate, that is confined to this world, is as eaſily, and as vainly done, as to prove, that the *garden of Eden* is not to be *found in*, nor makes a *part* of a map *that* is confined to *England*. And to infer *that* the *Iſraelites* therefore had no notion, of an immortality, becauſe it was not a *part* of their ritual, is no better, than to infer, that the people of *England* can have no notion of the garden of *Eden*, becauſe nothing of it, is to be ſeen in the map of this iſland.—But though not in the *ritual*, yet *Moſes* in other parts of his books written for the inſtruction of thoſe, to whom he gave the ritual, has given them the fulleſt notice, and higheſt proof of that *godlike* and *immortal* nature, they received at their creation, ſhewing them to be the children of the *Patriarchal covenant*, heirs of all the promiſes of eternal redemption, made to their fathers from the beginning of the world. Nay, the moſt heavenly doctrines and precepts given by the Apoſtles to the redeemed of Chriſt, as *heirs of immortality*, are to be found in the books of *Moſes*.

Dr. *Warburton*, takes much pains to get rid of the only true ſenſe of the following texts of *Moſes*. Thus, *Let us make man in our own image and likeneſs*. From theſe words, he ſays, *it is inferred, that the ſoul is immaterial*. But he thinks, *Moſes intimated quite another matter*. And ſo do I; for to intimate the *immateriality* of the ſoul, by ſaying, that man was made in the *image and likeneſs* of God, is quite ſhort of the ſenſe of the words; to ſay, that the ſoul is *immaterial*, is ſaying no more, than that it is not a *circle*, or a piece of *clay*, it is ſaying nothing at all of it, but only of ſomething that it is not. Therefore *Moſes* cannot be ſuppoſed to intimate ſuch a nothing as this, by the image and likeneſs of God. But he aſſerts a much higher matter, namely, that being created in the image of God, he was made a partaker of the divine nature, and therefore had not only immortality, but the riches and perfections of the deity grounded, and growing up. And this is the true ground of our eternal happineſs, that is, of that *eternal increaſe* of union, perfection and glory,

glory, which the redeemed ſoul will find in God; it is becauſe the image of God, being as a ſeed ſown into it, at its *creation*, it will to all eternity, after its admiſſion into heaven, open more and more its divine nature, and ſpring forth in new and farther fruits of *glory*, *beatitude* and *union* with God.

Every thing that is endleſs, numberleſs in the depth of eternity, is endleſs and numberleſs in the eſſence of the ſoul; what *ſeeing* is, what *hearing*, *feeling*, *&c.* are in their boundleſs variety, and ever increaſing newneſs of delights in eternity, theſe, with all their wonders, are the innate birthright, and ſure inheritance of every immortal godly ſoul. And on the other hand, the ſame boundleſs, numberleſs depth and growth of every tormenting, painful, frightful ſenſation, will open itſelf in every ſoul, *that* has loſt its God, and is leſt to its own immortal life within itſelf.

Vain therefore, is that principle publiſhed to the world, by a celebrated philoſopher of the laſt century, that the ſoul in its *firſt created ſtate*, is a mere *raſa tabula*, or *blank paper*. A fiction, that is contradicted by all that we know of every created thing in nature.

For every creature of this world, animate or inanimate, is in its degree, a *microcoſm* of all the powers, that are in the great world, of which it is a part. And nothing through all this univerſe, has in its eſſence, only the nature of a *raſa tabula*, or blank paper, but is in its kind, full of the riches, and powers of all outward nature.

In like manner muſt it be with the eternal world; every thing which comes from it, muſt be in its degree, a *microcoſm* of all the powers and glories of eternity.

Let it be ſaid, that the *matter of this world*, was in its firſt created ſtate, free from all extenſion, ſolidity and parts. and this would be as grave a ſaying, and as much founded in nature, as the *raſa tabula* of the ſoul; ſay again, that by degrees it got a materiality of length, breadth and parts, from *without*, and this

would be no greater a wonder; than that a ſoul, created inwardly deſtitute of any principle of knowledge, ſhould from outward cauſes grow up into a profound philoſopher. *Again*, ſay that the ſoul was at firſt, but a *blank paper*, till the organs of the body began to act upon it; and may not the enemies of religion, as juſtly ſay, that it muſt be the ſame blank paper again at the laſt, when the body ſhall be broken off from it?

If therefore the *Eſſay upon human Underſtanding* (which the doctor calls the moſt original book that ever was publiſhed) has produced a metaphyſicks, in many points dangerous to religion, and greatly ſerviceable to falſe, and ſuperficial reaſoning, it is not to be wondered at, ſince ſo eminent an error, is the fundamental principle on which it proceeds.

But to return to the doctor: He ſays, "The divine image and likeneſs muſt conſiſt in ſomething that is peculiar to man,—that the two things *peculiar* to man, are his ſhape, and his reaſon; that it cannot be in his ſhape, therefore it muſt be in his reaſon." *

The divine image and likeneſs cannot conſiſt in ſomething that is peculiar to man. It might as well conſiſt in his ſhape, as in his faculty of making *ſyllogiſms*; but on the contrary, it muſt conſiſt in *that*, and *only* that, which is, peculiar to God. Nor could man poſſibly be created in the image and likeneſs of God, unleſs ſomething peculiar to God, had been the divine glory and perfection of his creaturely life. For the creaturely life, and all that is peculiar to it, is at the utmoſt diſtance from God, and can only have a likeneſs to that, which is to be found in creatures.—God dwelling in a ſupernatural way in the creature, is the only poſſible image of God that can be in it. The fallen angels have every thing *that* was creaturely *left* in them, but they are horrible devils, becauſe they have loſt the ſupernatural image of God, which dwelt in them at their creation. They have ſtill reaſon, craft and ſubtlety; but becauſe

* Page 554.

cauſe they have nothing, but what is peculiar to the creature, they are all rage, torment and miſery.

The doctor therefore, inſtead of appealing to two things in man, his ſhape and his reaſon, as his true diſtinction from beaſts, ſhould have ſaid, by the authority of *Moſes*, that only one thing was peculiar to man, as his glorious diſtinction both from fallen angels, and terreſtrial animals, and *that* one thing is, his being created in the image and likeneſs of God. As to his outward ſhape, conſidered only as different from other animals, there is but little diſtinction in it; becauſe they are as different in ſhape from one another, as man is from them all. And if man at his creation had had no higher a gueſt within him, than his reaſon, his ſhape would have been little better, than that of a fox, or a ſerpent. For reaſon, when not under the government of a higher principle, is that ſame craft, and cunning, *that* is viſible in variety of beaſts; and is for the moſt part, as earthly an inſtrument of miſchievous paſſions, and luſts in men, as it is in beaſts. And what is more, it muſt be ſo, till it comes under the government of *that*, which was the *image and likeneſs* of God, in the firſt creation of man.

What is the difference between reaſon in St. *Paul*, a *Spinoſa*, a *Hobbes*, or a *Bolingbroke?* None at all, or no other than in their outward ſhape. Therefore if reaſon be the divine image and likeneſs of God in man, a *Hobbes* and a *Bolingbroke*, had as much of it as St. *Paul*. And a man that is all his life long reaſoning himſelf into Atheiſm, and the wiſdom of living according to his own luſts, muſt be allowed to give daily proof of his having the image and likeneſs of God, very powerfully manifeſted in him.

The doctor's great proof, that reaſon is the image and likeneſs of God, is becauſe *Moſes* immediately adds, *Let them rule over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowls of heaven, and over the beaſts of the earth.* "For what, ſays he could inveſt man with this dominion

minion *de facto*, as well as *de jure*, but his reason ?" *

Our bleſſed Lord, at leaving the world, ſaith, " Theſe ſigns ſhall follow them that believe; in my name, they ſhall caſt out devils, they ſhall ſpeak with new tongues, they ſhall take up ſerpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it ſhall not hurt them." Now let it be aſked, *what could inveſt the believers in Chriſt with this dominion* de facto, *as well as* de jure, *but their reaſon?* Both this queſtion, and the ſolution of it, is juſt as ſound, and theological as the doctor's.

For it was not any thing of their own, but ſolely the name, that is, power of Chriſt dwelling, and operating in them, that inveſted them with the dominion over devils, ſerpents, diſeaſes, and all outward deadly, or hurtful things. Now *that* which gave this power, to the believers in Chriſt, was *that very ſame*, which gave to the firſt perfect man, a *power of ruling* over all the creatures of this world, and of living in full ſuperiority and dominion over all that was, or could be hurtful, and deadly, in fire, or water, heat or cold, or any elementary things. So *that Adam* whilſt ſtanding in his firſt ſtate of glory, and power, had the ſame reaſon to ſay of all *that* he was, and did, that which St. *Paul* ſaid, yet *not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me.*

And how the doctor came to think of any other power, as the *ability* of man to *rule* over the creatures, is very ſtrange, ſince the goſpel has ſo plainly told him, *that they only are the children of God, who are led by the ſpirit of God.* If therefore the firſt man, created in the image and likeneſs of God, may be ſuppoſed by his creation to have been a child of God, then ſure is it, that he had the *ſpirit of God*, living and working in him. And that ſurely may be allowed to have been his *true* and his only qualification, to have and exerciſe a dominion over the reſt of the creation.

The doctor, in order to find out *that* image, and likeneſs of God in man, of which *Moſes* writes, looks into

* *D. L.* page 551.

into the conſtitution of that *two-legged* animal, who is *the diſputer of this world*. As likely to ſucceed, as if in order to find out *that paradiſe*, of which *Moſes* writes, he ſhould ſeaſch for it in the *hundreds* of *Eſſex*, or in the *wilds* of *Kent*.

For *Moſes*, to prevent the folly of looking for the divine image in any thing, that is *natural* to the *preſent* ſtate of man, has given us aſſurance, that *this firſt* man, created in the image of God, died the very day that he did eat of the forbidden tree. And that nothing of this divine man remained, but terrors within, and ſuch a figure of himſelf, as filled him with ſhame and confuſion.

And a greater than *Moſes* has told us, *that* man, in his preſent *natural ſtate*, is ſo dead to that firſt divine glory, that he has no poſſibility of entering into the kingdom of God, till he is born again from above. This ſufficiently ſhews *that* he who will find out, in what the image of God in man, conſiſted, muſt as the apoſtle ſaith, *walk by faith, and not by ſight*.

The next text of *Moſes*, which the doctor miſerably injures, is thus quoted by him. "The Lord God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul; that is, ſay the objectors, had an immortal ſoul."

Who the objectors are, I know not; but the truth of the text, requires us to ſay, that therefore man had a divine and godlike ſoul, a true offſpring, of the divine nature. Becauſe the breath or ſpirit of the holy triune God, was that breath, by which he was made a living ſoul.——And therefore the riches of this firſt life in man, were the riches of the divine nature manifeſting itſelf in the ſoul.

But the doctor will have it, that only an unlearned, *Engliſh* reader, can collect any thing to be divine in the ſoul, from the words of *Moſes*, as not knowing, that what is tranſlated, a living ſoul, ſignifies, in the original, only a living animal. But this every *Engliſh* reader may know to be a vain criticiſm; for

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no ſtreſs is laid upon the expreſſion, a living ſoul, no more than if it had been ſaid, a living animal. But the full proof of the divine greatneſs, of the human ſoul, lies ſolely in this, that the breath, or ſpirit of the holy Trinity was breathed into it, and was that which made it to be a living ſoul, and therefore the life that aroſe in it, was the life of God in the ſoul.

The doctor thus comments upon the words of the text. "God, the great plaſtic artiſt, is here repreſented, as making and ſhaping out a figure of earth and clay, which he afterwards animates, or inſpires with life. He breathed into this ſtatue the breath of life, and the lump of clay became a living creature."

Had this elegant, and moſt graphical deſcription been only found in ſome minor poet, or ſchool declamation, it might have been overlooked, but in a proſe treatiſe of divinity, it ought not to paſs uncenſured. I know of nothing that can equal it, unleſs it be ſuppoſed that ſome ingenious anthropomorphite, reading theſe words, *and the Lord God did unto Adam and Eve, make coats of ſkins, and cloathed them;* ſhould thus deſcribe the matter, "Here, God, the great artiſt, is repreſented, as having the ſkins of beaſts before him, and with his divine hands, cutting, ſhaping and joining them together in forms of garments, fitted to the ſize, and diſtinction of the firſt man and his wife."

I may defy any one to ſhew, that this comment, does not pay as great regard to the *letter*, and do as much honour to the ſenſe of this ſcripture, as the doctor's doth to the other text.

The ſacred text, *God formed man* of the duſt of *the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life*, is a ſhort and full declaration of a moſt important truth, namely, that man was brought into being, *in a twofold nature*, having the nature of this outward world, and the nature of heaven; the former ſignified by his being formed of the duſt of the ground, the *latter*, by the breath of God breathed into him.—To be formed out

of

of the duſt o the ground, is the ſame thing, as if it had been ſaid, that he was formed out of all the *riches*, *powers* and *virtues* that are in this whole viſible world. For every property of nature, is hidden in the earth. And man, ſo far as he was deſigned to be a creature of this outward world, is therefore ſaid to be formed out of the earth, becauſe the earth is not only the treaſure-houſe of all that is in outward nature, but is the *mother*, of all the three other elements. And as all things of this word, whether animate or inanimate, are from the earth, as their mother, ſo in the earth is there every power, and bleſſing of life, to ſuſtain every thing *that* has its body from it; as appears by that fruitful power, which is continually giving forth itſelf in all kinds of vegetable food, *fitted* to the wants of every living creature.

What therefore can it be called, but a moſt deplorable blindneſs in learned reaſon, to conſider man as making his firſt entrance into paradiſe in no *better a ſtate than that of duſt and clay*, formed into a dead lumpiſh figure of a man, for this reaſon, becauſe he was ſaid to be formed out of the duſt of the ground? Blindneſs indeed! when it is ſo evident, *that* even now, after the curſe is in the earth, yet every thing, even the pooreſt *weed* that comes out of the duſt of the ground, is in a much higher ſtate, and enters into this world with a degree of life from its mother *the* earth.—Had the doctor never ſeen, or heard of any other things formed out of the earth, but ſuch as our potters, and dealers in clay can make out of it, there might have been ſome ſort of excuſe for his *Adam* of dead clay formed out of the earth. But when every day of his life has ſhewn him *that* almoſt infinite variety, powers, virtues and wonders in the kingdom of vegetables, all coming out of the earth, and nouriſhed by it, when the ſcripture has told him *that* the beaſts and cattle of all kinds were formed out of the earth, had their fleſh and blood from it, and their daily ſuſtenance from its fruitful womb: it is ſtrange to a degree of aſtoniſhment, that he ſhould hold, *that* out of this *rich* earth, when in its paradiſical ſtate, when man,

man, the glory of the creation, was formed out of it, and God the former, nothing ſhould come forth, but a dead lump of clay in the figure of a man.

Again, What a total diſregard has the doctor here ſhewn to the very letter of ſcripture? The text ſaith, *God formed man out of the duſt of the ground*, nothing elſe is aſcribed to God, as his work in this matter; but the doctor adds quite another matter as the work of God, namely, ſhaping and forming lumpiſh clay into a dead figure of a man.

And then follows another fiction equally againſt the letter of ſcripture. For he ſays, that AFTERWARDS, God breathed life into it. But in the ſcripture account, there is not a ſyllable of any firſt, or afterwards.—Two things are ſpoken of the birth of man, and as they cannot be ſpoken both at once, ſo one muſt come after the other in the relation of them. The ſcripture mentions them as two diſtinct things; and the reaſon of mentioning them thus diſtinctly, is not to teach us, they were done at two different times, the one firſt, and the other afterwards, but to give us the aſſurance, that man came into the world in a twofold nature, the one from the heavenly breath of God, and the other from this viſible world.

But the union of thoſe two natures in the formation of man, was owing to one, and the ſame operation of God.—There is no ſooner, or later, in the beginning of the ſoul, and of the body: the beginning of one, is the beginning of the other.

To ſuppoſe that man was made a dead image, and afterwards had life breathed into it, is no better philoſophy, than to ſuppoſe, that God firſt created the vegetable creature, and afterwards added a vegetable life to it; that he firſt created the globe of the ſun, and afterwards added heat and light to it.

God ſaid, Let the earth bring forth the living creature. What a folly to ſuppoſe, that the creature, and its life, are two ſeparate things, that the one came firſt, and the other afterwards? No better, than ſuppoſing, that a circle and its roundneſs, are two ſeparate things,

things, that firſt comes forth the figure, and afterwards its roundneſs.

But the general deſign of the *D. L.* is to eſtabliſh this moſt horrible doctrine, that *Moſes* deſignedly and induſtriouſly ſecreted from God's choſen people, all thought of any eternal relation that they had with God; which is the ſame, as ſaying, that he deſignedly ſuppreſſed the one only poſſible foundation of true religion. For the immortality of the human nature, is the only ground of homage and regard to an inviſible and eternal God. And unleſs man was by nature eſſentially related to God, and the eternal world, it would have been as unreaſonable for the God of the eternal world, to call man to an heavenly adoration of him, as to bid earthly fleſh and blood, *be*, and *do* that, which angels are, and do in heaven.—Therefore the firſt notice from an eternal God, given to man of a religious homage due to him, and the bare capacity of man to embrace ſuch notice, is the greateſt of proofs, that man has ſomething of the eternal God in him. For as nothing can hunger, but that which by nature, both wants and has a capacity to eat; ſo nothing can receive a religion relating to the eternal God, but that which has within itſelf, both a want and capacity to partake of the eternal world. And had not man an eternal ſpirit in him, as an offſpring of the eternal God, he could no more want to have any intercourſe with the eternal world, than a fiſh can want to be out of the water. Nor could any taught adoration of the one eternal God, enter any farther into his heart, or be of more uſe to him, than ſo much religion taught to a parrot. For man being, or believing himſelf to be, as merely a creature of this world, as the parrot is, could no more regard any thing, but what his earthly nature has a fondneſs for, than the parrot doth. *Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die*, would be the higheſt and trueſt philoſophy, if there is no more of a divine life, or heavenly nature in man, than in the chattering ſparrow. In this caſe, worldly craft, whether in a fox, or a man, is the higheſt uſe of its natural powers.

For if the earthly life is equally *the all* of both, earthly wiſdom muſt be *equally* the perfection of them both. For it can no more be the duty of an earthly creature to be heavanly minded, than of a celeſtial creature to be carnally minded.

If therefore the *Iſraelites* under *Moſes*, were by him directed to conſider themſelves merely as creatures of this world, having nothing to enjoy, or hope for, but the good things of this life, it muſt be ſaid, he did all that well could be done, to make them an *earthly*, *covetous*, *rapacious*, *ſtiff-necked*, and *brutal* people. And all the complaints which the prophets have brought againſt them, on that account, ought to have been made only againſt *Moſes* himſelf, and the religion that was ſet up by him. For a religion only offering, and wholly confining people to earthly enjoyments, may ſurely be ſaid, not only to make, but even require them to be wholly ſenſual and earthly minded. And every hearty believer of ſuch a religion, is by his very faith called upon, to make the moſt that he can, of the *luſt of the fleſh*, *the luſt of the eyes*, *and the pride of life*.

Moſes ſaith, "Hear *O Iſrael*, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength." Now theſe *Iſraelites* looking backwards to God's covenant of redemption, made with their forefathers, of which they were the undoubted heirs; and forwards to this new covenant of a theocracy, added, as God's peculiar mercy to them in this life, to keep them to himſelf, to ſupport them under their afflictions, and to arm them with patience in waiting for *that* eternal redemption, in the faith of which, their anceſtors had died ſo full of joy and comfort: In this double view of their ſtate under God, which *Moſes* had ſo fully ſet before *them*, and with the ſtrongeſt injunctions, to be daily teaching them to their children, they had the higheſt reaſon to rejoice in God, and to love him with all their heart and ſoul and ſtrength.

But

But to ſuppoſe this *Moſes*, deſignedly ſecreting from them, the knowledge of that eternal relation they had to God, on which the hopes of their forefathers were founded, and on which he himſelf was made able to chuſe the afflictions of Chriſt, has ſomething very ſhocking in it. For if *Moſes* was ſo good a man, becauſe he had faith in the eternal redemption promiſed from the beginning, can there be more cruelty, than in ſuppoſing him, deſigning by his religious ſyſtem, wholly to obliterate all thought and remembrance of God's unchangeable covenant of life, and extinguiſh all ſenſe, and hope of a redemption to come? To what purpoſe is it to ſay to ſuch a people, ſhut up in earthly hopes, "Thou ſhalt love the one God of heaven with all thy heart?" For if he had ſucceeded in his deſign, and fixed them in the belief, that they had no treaſure but in this world, we have Chriſt's word for it, that the affections of their hearts could go no where elſe, ſaying, as an eternal truth, *that where our treaſure is, there muſt the heart be alſo.* So that in this caſe, no love of God, and therefore no other divine virtue, could have any place in thoſe, who conformed to the deſign of *Moſes*.

The doctor, with ſome indignation, tries to evade this unavoidable conſequence. "The true foundation of mortality is the will of God. But is not the diſtinction between right and wrong, perpetually inforced by the law of *Moſes* on this principle? This then is the ſpring of all virtue, and to give it the greateſt efficacy, the love and fear of God is there likewiſe inceſſantly inculcated. But how does a long, or ſhort exiſtence, a life here, or elſewhere, at all affect the practice of virtue ſo founded?" *

All this is quite beſide the point, and leaves the *Jews* under the ſame incapacity of every divine virtue, as has been above aſſerted. For a ſhort or long exiſtence, is here never thought of, as a reaſon, why we ſhould, or ſhould not be morally good. For duration, conſidered in itſelf, whether ſhort or long, is only a natural conſequence of *that kind* of life,

* *D. L.* page 587.

which the creature hath. For, ſuch as its *internal* nature, ſuch is the good, and evil *that* belongs to it, without any regard to its longer or ſhorter duration.

Now it is the internal nature of man, not conſidered as ſhort, but as wholly earthly, and created for only *earthly goods*, *that* is the reaſon, why ſuch a kind of life is incapable of any divine virtue, and cannot poſſibly have any other love, affections or tempers, but ſuch as are confined to this world: And alſo, why every kind of envy, greedineſs, craft, and contrivance how to get the moſt of every earthly thing, muſt govern every man, that has only the earthly nature in him, as unavoidably, as they govern birds, and beaſts. And to tell ſuch a people of a goodneſs, to which their earthly nature does not lead them, as it leads every other animal to *that* which it likes, is as vain, as to preach to the ſparks, not to fly upwards. Nor can a nature, wholly earthly, any more ſin, by coveting only earthly things, than the *lion* ſins, by having all his heart ſet upon his prey.

But the doctor has a maxim, by which he proves, that the *Jews*, though wholly confined to earthly hopes, and enjoyments, yet might and ought to have been heavenly minded, *namely*, becauſe *the true foundation of morality, is the will of God*. And yet this very maxim is itſelf a ſufficient proof, that an earthly people, created only for earthly goods, are by the very will of God directed to be earthly minded. For the will of God, in every creature, is manifeſted by *that kind* of nature, which it hath only from God. Therefore earthly creatures, by being earthly minded, pay as full obedience to the will of God, as pure heavenly ſpirits by their being heavenly minded. Therefore if man is only an animal of this world, by the will of God, diſtinguiſhed only from other creatures, by ſuperior ſkill, ſubtlety, and contrivances (as they are from one another) he neither is, nor can be, under any other law, relating to his good and evil, but that which is the law of all other animals, that have all their good and evil from this world. And as it is as good in the wolf, to be ravening, as in the lamb to be harmleſs,

becauſe

becauſe they both follow their created nature; ſo if man is as merely a creature of this world, as they are, when he, by his ſuperior ſubtlety, in order to make the moſt of his worldly life, either feigns the innocence of the lamb, or puts on the ravening wolf, he follows his nature, as they do theirs, and is juſt as good and as bad as they are. And to tell ſuch a man of the beauty of holineſs, or call him to the denial of his own will, for this reaſon, becauſe the true foundation of virtue, is the will of God, would be to as much purpoſe, as if you was only to require him never to ſleep any more, becauſe holy angels never ſleep in heaven. For what can a creature that can have no good, all its life, but that which is like the good of milk and honey, have to do with any divine virtue?—If therefore *Moſes* deſignedly, fixed the *Iſraelites* in a belief, that they had no good to hope for, but that which fleſh and blood could find in earthly things, they were by him taken out of the ſphere of every virtue, that can be called godly or divine, and could have no fear of God, but like that, which they might have towards him, or the giants, nor any love of God, but that which they had to their bellies.

Farther, that the doctor has not entered into any right conception of the ſubject, he is upon, is plain from his aſking, "But how does a ſhort or long exiſtence, a life here, or elſewhere, at all affect the practice of virtue ſo founded?"—It juſt ſo much affects it, as place, or ſpace affects the exiſtence of bodies. They are not brought forth by place or ſpace, but they could have no exiſtence but in place or ſpace. And thus it is, that duration affects the practice of all divine virtue, it could have no poſſibility of exiſtence, but in a nature incapable of dying.—— Corruptibility, and divine goodneſs, are as impoſſible to be united, as life and death.—Death may as well exert the functions of life, as a mortal creature breathe heavenly tempers and affections. For though the duration of the creature is not the ground, or reaſon of any divine virtue, yet no creature can be

capable of it, but that, which by the divinity of its birth, is born immortal.

What an inconſiſtency, to ſay of a creature of a ſhort exiſtence, or whoſe life is vaniſhing away, that its true father is in heaven, and that it ought therefore "to be perfect as its heavenly father is perfect?" Can that which is daily tending to non-exiſtence, be daily growing up in the perfection of God, or that which is always approaching towards death, be a child of the ever-living God? As well might it be ſaid of the muſhroom, that it has the angels in heaven for its brethren, as of man, beginning to exiſt to day, and ending his exiſtence to-morrow, that he is a child of his everlaſting father in heaven.

There are ſome other egregious errors which I intended to have remarked, but I am already got beyond the proper bounds of a letter.—But holy *David*'s caſe, I cannot but mention, as ſufficient to have deterred the doctor from an hypotheſis, which has obliged him to place this ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael* amongſt thoſe, who had not the leaſt thought of any eternal relation, to God. This holy *David*, the type of Chriſt, "who knew that God had ſworn with an oath, that out of the fruit of his loins, he would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit on his throne;" this great prophet, who foretold the reſurrection of Chriſt, *that his ſoul was not left in hell, neither did his fleſh ſee corruption*, this *David*, thus deep in the counſels of God, and acquainted with the great article of the reſurrection, this ſpiritual, typical, propheſying *David*, is, for the ſake of the doctor's project, crowded amongſt thoſe, who were not allowed to have any other relation to God, or any thing elſe to hope from him, or thank him for, but the bleſſings of a temporal life, till death had put the ſame end, to all of *David*, as it did to thoſe few ſheep, that he once kept. And what is ſtill worſe, this ſame *David* is made the moſt zealous preacher of the folly of fearing, or hoping for any thing after death: And is, appealed to by the doctor, and his aſſiſtant, as giving the moſt full evi-

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dence againſt all happineſs, but that of this life, and repreſented in his divine tranſports, as ſetting forth the wiſdom of believing that the life of man ends like that of rotten ſheep, in a death *that* brings him into the dark land of forgetfulneſs; ſinging gloriouſly, " the dead praiſe not the Lord, neither any that go down into ſilence. In death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave, who ſhall give thee thanks?"

Thus it is, that *David*, by theſe gentlemen is made a preacher againſt a future ſtate; not conſidering, that ſuch infidelity would have been worſe in *David*, than it poſſibly can be in any modern infidel. But the truth is, the holy prophet in all paſſages of this kind, is only calling upon God for the continuance, and full manifeſtation of the bleſſings of *that* temporal theocracy, which could only be given by God, or received by man, whilſt he was on this ſide death. And the *darkneſs*, *ſilence*, or *inſenſibility* affirmed of death, has no relation to a *total end* of life and ſenſibility, but ſolely to an end of all *enjoyment*, of the bleſſings promiſed by the divine theocracy. *David*, as a *Son* of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, had their faith and piety, and ſuch his pſalms are full of heavenly devotion, and flaming with divine love. But *David*, as a *ſon* of the covenant made with *Moſes*, was alſo an heir of the temporal bleſſings of the theocracy; and in this capacity, had a right to ſay, *Why do the wicked proſper? Wilt thou ſhew thy wonders in the grave?* That is, canſt thou give thy promiſed temporal bleſſings, when death has taken away all poſſibility of receiving them?

But if it could be ſuppoſed, that *David* by the foregoing expreſſions, meant to give up the promiſes of eternal redemption made to all his forefathers, and called the world to look for no more, but what they could get in this vale of miſery, what excuſe can be made for the Chriſtian church, which from firſt to laſt, has made ſuch heatheniſh ſongs a part of the goſpel ſervice? For in this caſe, theſe pſalms may be juſtly eſteemed prophane, as having a more direct tendency

tendency to beget, and fix infidelity in the hearts of men, than the hymns of the heathen poets.

I muſt yet add a word, upon the doctor's moſt theological account of man's firſt ability to ſpeak articulate words.

"In judging, ſays he, only from the *nature of things*, one ſhould be apt to embrace the opinion of *Diodorus Siculus*, that the firſt men lived for ſome time in woods, and caves, after the manner of beaſts, uttering only *confuſed ſounds*." * And yet it is hardly poſſible for a man to make a judgment more contrary to the nature of things. For does not the nature of almoſt all animals, beaſts, and birds ſhew us, that they have a natural untaught language, not conſiſting of *confuſed ſounds*, but diſtinct by an articulate difference and intelligible to every one of the ſame ſpecies? If therefore the nature of things will allow us to ſuppoſe, that man was created as perfect in his kind, as the animals were in theirs, then it will oblige us to affirm, that the firſt of mankind had from nature, an untaught language, as ſuitable to the ends of their creation, as diſtinct, and intelligible to themſelves, as that of birds, or beaſts, is to them in their ſeveral kinds. Now it muſt not be ſaid, that the doctor has adopted the whole opinion of *Diodorus*, though ſo highly (as he thinks) conformable to the nature of things; for he has given up that of man's living *in woods and caves*, and has only choſen to ſtand by that, which is much the worſt part of it namely, his natural inability to utter any thing *but confuſed ſounds*.— However, to make amends for all this poverty of ſpeech, in which man was brought forth by God, the doctor has a conjecture, how it ſoon came to be better with him. In ſcripture, ſays he, "we find that God taught the firſt man, religion, and can we think, he would not at the ſame time, teach him language? Again, when God created man, he made woman for his companion, but the only means of enjoying that benefit, was the uſe of ſpeech. Can we believe that he would leave them to get out of the *forlorn*

* *D. L.* vol. II. page 81.

forlorn condition of brutality as they could ?" * —Shocking and even blaſphemous words! For how little ſhort can it be of that, to ſay, that man, created in the image and likeneſs of God, was created in a *forlorn condition of brutality ?* Can any infidel more deſpiſe and ridicule all that is ſaid both in the old, and new teſtament, concerning man's creation, his high birth, and deſtination, his fall, and redemption, than is here done ?

In the ſcripture we are told, that man in the firſt, perfect ſtate of his creation, came forth a living image, and likeneſs of the all-perfect God ; that he came forth in this exalted ſtate of perfection, above all other animals of this world, in order to be a lord, and ruler over them.' Can there be a more open ridicule made of all this, than to hold, that this firſt glorious image of God, came forth in a *forlorn brutal condition*, unable to utter any thing, but *confuſed ſounds?* Or what can be more unbecoming a Chriſtian doctor, than to eſpouſe ſuch a paltry notion from the authority of a pagan *Greek*, in full contradiction to all, that *Moſes*, Chriſt and his apoſtles, have ſaid of the firſt heavenly nature, divine birth and glorious prerogatives of man ? What a mockery is here made of the whole Chriſtian ſyſtem, which ſuppoſes man to have fallen from ſuch a high degree of heavenly union with God, that nothing leſs than the birth of the ſon of God in fallen man, could reſtore him to that perfection, which he had at firſt ? What a folly to talk of the fall of man, if he came out of the hands of God in a forlorn condition of brutality ?

But the doctor comes now to his full proof, that man had at firſt no articulate ſpeech, and that he was actually taught it afterwards by God ; " God brought every beaſt of the field, and every fowl of the air, unto Adam, to ſee what he would call them."

And yet, ſo unlucky is the doctor, that no words can give a higher proof, that *Adam* had not only an articulate ſpeech, but in ſuch a degree of perfection,

as

* *D. L.* ibid.

as none of his natural ſons, not the whole tribe of linguiſts, critics, and grammarians, ever had, or can poſſibly have. For if it could be ſuppoſed, that any man was a hundred times more knowing than the doctor is, in what he calls his *enigmatic*, *curiologic hieroglyphic*, *emblematic*, *ſymbolic* profundities, yet if all the beaſts of the field, and all the fowls of the air, were to be brought before him to be diſtinguiſhed from one another, by articulate ſounds of his voice, even ſuch a man would be as unequal to the taſk, as a *Tom Thumb*. And of all the abſurdities, *that* ever were heard of, ſurely none can equal that, of ſuppoſing, that *Adam* had not articulate ſpeech, but had it to learn at a time, when he was called to the exerciſe of the higheſt perfection of language, namely, to diſtinguiſh ſuch an infinite number of creatures, by different articulate ſounds of his voice. It is like ſuppoſing, that a man whoſe eyes had no natural power of diſtinguiſhing one thing from another, ſhould on that account, have all the creatures in the world, brought before him, that he might deſcribe every difference in form, and figure, that belonged to them.

The doctor has by ſtrength of genius, and great induſtry, amaſſed together no ſmall heap of learned deciſions of points, doctrines, as well Heatheniſh, as Chriſtian, much the greateſt part of which, the Chriſtian reader will find himſelf obliged to drive out of his thoughts, as ſoon as he can in good earneſt ſay, *What muſt I do to be ſaved?*—This collection of deciſions, he calls his *projected defence of Chriſtianity*, which if it was ſuch, Chriſtianity muſt have been but poorly provided for its ſupport by the four goſpels. I ſhall make no doubt of his intending, what he ſays by them. But a project in defence of Chriſtianity, is not more promiſing, than a trap to catch humility. The nature of things allows no more of the one, than of the other. To be a defender of Chriſtianity, is to be a defender of Chriſt, but none can defend him in any other degree, than ſo far as he is his follower. To be with Chriſt, is *to walk as he walked*, and he *that* is not ſo with him, is *againſt him*.

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There are two ways of embracing Chriſtianity, the one is, as a *ſinner*, the other as a *ſcholar*; the former is the way taught by Chriſt and his apoſtles, the latter is the invention of men, fallen from the Chriſtian life under the power of natural reaſon, and verbal learning.—Now theſe two ways are not to be conſidered, as only the one better than the other, but in ſuch a difference, as right and wrong, true and falſe, bear to one another. For there is no poſſibility of taking one ſtep in Chriſtianity, but as a ſinner, for it has no errand but to the ſinner, has no relief but for ſin, and nothing can receive it, but the heart wounded, and wearied with the burden of its own ſin. All the goſpel is but a foreign tale, a dead letter to the moſt logically learned man in the world, who does not feel in the depth of his ſoul, that all the reaſonableneſs, and excellency of goſpel truth, lies in that ſund of ſin, impurity, and corrupt tempers, which are inſeparable from him, till he is born again. And if the doctor, in his application to the Deiſts, had preſſed home this affecting truth, which ſtands at the door of every man's heart, and is the only ground of Chriſtian redemption, he had ſhewn a better care and concern for their ſouls, and had done more to awaken them out of their infidelity, than by all that wit and ſatyr in his dedication of his book to them. For like begets like; love and ſerioufneſs in the ſpeaker, beget love and ſerioufneſs in the hearer; and he that has no earneſtneſs towards unbelievers, but that of perſwading them not to loſe their ſhare of the love and mercy of God in Chriſt Jeſus, towards helpleſs, fallen man, can only do it, in the ſpirit, and language of that love and goodneſs, in whoſe arms, he longs to ſee them embraced.

But as no man ever came to Chriſt, but becauſe he was weary, and heavy laden with the burden of his own natural diſorder, and wanted reſt to his ſoul, ſo nothing can help man to find the neceſſity of coming to Chriſt, but that, which helps him to find and feel a miſery of ſin and corruption, which in ſome, the care and pleaſures of this life, and in others, the happineſs

pineſs of finding themſelves wits, and polite ſcholars, never ſuffered them to feel before.

Our Lord's parable of the *prodigal* ſon, contains the whole matter between God and fallen man. It relates nothing particular to this, or that perſon, but ſets forth the ſtrict truth of every man's ſtate, with regard to his heavenly father. For every ſon of *Adam* has every thing in him, that is ſaid of that prodigal; he has loſt his firſt ſtate, is wandered as far from his heavenly father and country, has abuſed, and waſted his father's bleſſings, and is that very poor ſwineherd, craving huſks in a land of famine, inſtead of living in the glory of his father's family; and of every reader of that parable, it may be juſtly ſaid, *Thou art the man.* And no ſon of *Adam*, do what he will, can poſſibly come out of the poverty, ſhame, and miſery of his fallen ſtate, till he finds, and feels, and confeſſes from the bottom of his heart, all that, which the penitent prodigal found, felt, and confeſſed.

I ſhould have had much uneaſineſs, my lord, in expoſing ſo many groſs errors both in the matter, and manner of the doctor's books, did not my heart bear me witneſs, that no want of good-will, or due reſpect towards him, but ſolely a regard to that, which ought only to be regarded, has directed my pen.

AN

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EXTRACT

FROM

Mr. *LAW*'s

Spirit of PRAYER.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

Treating of ſome matters preparatory to the Spirit of Prayer.

THE greateſt part of mankind, nay of Chriſtians, may be ſaid to be aſleep; and that particular way of life, which takes up each man's mind, thoughts, and actions, may well be called his particular dream. This degree of vanity is equally viſible in every form and order of life. The learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, are all in the ſame ſtate of ſlumber; only paſſing away a ſhort life in a different kind of dream. But why ſo? It is becauſe man is born into this world, not for the ſake of living here, not for any thing this world can give him, but only to have time and place, to become either an eternal partaker of a divine life with God, or to have a helliſh eternity amongſt fallen angels: And therefore, every man who has not his eyes, his heart, and his hands, continually governed by this twofold eternity, may be juſtly ſaid to be faſt aſleep. And a life devoted to the intereſts, and enjoyments of this world, ſpent and waſted in the ſlavery of earthly deſires, may be truly called a dream, as having all the ſhortneſs, vanity, and deluſion of a dream; only with this great difference, that when a dream is over, nothing is loſt but fictions and fancies; but when the dream of life is ended *only* by death, all that eternity is loſt, for which we were brought into being. Now there is no miſery in this world, nothing that makes either the life or death of man to be full of calamity, but this blindneſs and inſenſibility of his ſtate, into which he ſo willingly, nay obſtinately plunges himſelf. Every thing that

has the nature of evil and diſtreſs in it, takes its riſe from hence. Do but ſuppoſe a man to know himſelf; that he comes into this world on no other errand, but to riſe out of the vanity of time into the riches of eternity; do but ſuppoſe him to govern his inward thoughts and outward actions by this view of himſelf, and then to him every day has loſt all its evil; proſperity and adverſity have no difference, becauſe he receives and uſes them both in the ſame ſpirit; life and death are equally welcome, becauſe equally parts of his way to eternity. For poor and miſerable as this life is, we have all of us free acceſs to all that is great and good, and happy; and carry within ourſelves a *key* to all the treaſures that heaven has to beſtow upon us.—We ſtarve in the midſt of plenty, groan under infirmities, with the remedy in our own hand; live and die, without knowing and feeling any thing of the *one, only good*, whilſt we have it in our power to know and enjoy it in as great a reality, as we know and feel the power of this world over us: For heaven is as near to our ſouls, as this world is to our bodies; and we are created, we are redeemed, to have our converſation in it. God, the only *good* of all intelligent natures, is not an abſent or diſtant God, but is more preſent *in* and *to* our ſouls, than our own bodies; and we are ſtrangers to heaven, and without God in the world, for this only reaſon, becauſe we are void of that ſpirit of prayer, which alone can, unite us with the *one* Good, and open heaven and the kingdom of God within us. A root ſet in the fineſt ſoil, in the beſt climate, and bleſſed with all that ſun, and air, and rain can do for it, is not in ſo ſure a way to perfection, as a man whoſe ſpirit aſpires after all that, which God is ready and infinitely deſirous to give him. For the *ſun* meets not the ſpringing bud that ſtretches towards him, with half that certainty, as God, the ſource of all good, communicates himſelf to the ſoul that longs to partake of him.

We are all of us, the offſpring of God, more nearly related to him, than we are to one another; for *in him we live, and move, and have our being*. The firſt man

man that was brought forth from God, had the ſpirit of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt* breathed into him, and ſo he became a living ſoul. Thus was our firſt father born of God, and ſtood in paradiſe in the image and likeneſs of God. He was the image and likeneſs of God, not with regard to his outward ſhape, for no ſhape has any likeneſs to God; but becauſe the Holy Trinity had breathed their own nature and ſpirit into him. And as the deity, *Father, Son*, and *Holy Spirit*, are always in heaven, and make heaven to be every where; ſo this ſpirit, breathed by them into man, brought heaven into man along with it; and ſo man was in heaven, as well as on earth, that is, in paradiſe, which ſignifies an heavenly ſtate.

Adam had all that divine nature, which angels have: But as he was brought forth to be a lord, and ruler of a new world; ſo it was neceſſary that he ſhould alſo have the material nature of this new created world in himſelf. His body was the *medium or means* through which he was to have commerce with this world, become viſible to its creatures, and rule over it and them. Thus ſtood our firſt father; an angel as to his ſpirit; yet dwelling in a body taken from this new created world; which however was as inferior to him, as ſubject to him, as the earth and all its creatures were.

CHAP. II.

Diſcovering the true way of turning to God, *and of finding the kingdom of heaven, the riches of eternity, in our ſouls.*

ALL our ſalvation conſiſts in the *manifeſtation of the nature, life, and ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt in us.* Enter with all thy heart into this truth, let thy eye be always upon it, do every thing in view of it, try every thing by the truth of it, love nothing but for

the ſake of it. Wherever thou goeſt, whatever thou doſt at home, or abroad, in the field or at church, do all in a deſire of union with Chriſt, in imitation of his tempers and inclinations, and look upon all as nothing, but that which exerciſes, and encreaſes the ſpirit, and life of Chriſt in thy ſoul. From morning to night keep Jeſus in thy heart, long for nothing, deſire nothing, hope for nothing, but to have all that is within thee, changed into the ſpirit and temper of the holy Jeſus. Let this be thy chriſtianity, thy church, and thy religion. For this new birth in Chriſt thus firmly believed, and continually deſired, will do every thing that thou wanteſt to have done in thee, it will dry up all the ſprings of vice, ſtop all the workings of evil in thy nature, it will bring all that is Good into thee, it will open all the goſpel within thee, and thou wilt know what it is to be taught of God. This longing deſire of thy heart to be one with Chriſt will ſoon put a ſtop to all the vanity of thy life, and nothing will be admitted to enter into thy heart, or proceed from it, but what comes from God and returns to God; thou wilt ſoon be, as it were, tied and bound in the chains of all holy affections, thy *mouth* will have a *watch* ſet upon it, thy *ears* would willingly hear nothing that does not tend to God, nor thy *eyes* be open, but to ſee, and find occaſions of doing good. In a word, when this faith has got both thy head and thy *heart*, it will then be with thee, as it was with the *merchant* who found a *pearl of great price*, it will make thee glad to *ſell all that thou haſt, and buy it*. For all that had ſeized and poſſeſſed the heart of any man, whatever the *merchant* of this world had got together, whether of riches, power, honour, learning, or reputation, loſes all its value, is counted but as *dung*, and willingly parted with, as ſoon as this glorious pearl, the new birth in Chriſt Jeſus, is diſcovered and found by him. This therefore may ſerve as a touch-ſtone, whereby every one may try the truth of his ſtate; if the old man is ſtill a *merchant* within thee, trading in worldly honour, power, or learning, if the

wiſdom

wiſdom of this world is not fooliſhneſs to thee, if earthly intereſts, and ſenſual pleaſures are ſtill the deſire of thy heart, and only covered under a form of Godlineſs, a cloke of creeds, obſervances and inſtitutions of religion, thou mayeſt be aſſured, that the pearl of great price is not yet found by thee. For where Chriſt is in the ſoul, there all carnal wiſdom, arts of advancement, with every pride and glory of this life, are ſo many *heathen idols* willingly renounced, and the man is not only content, but rejoices to ſay, that *his kingdom is not of this world.*

But thou wilt perhaps ſay, How ſhall this great work, the knowledge of Chriſt, be effected in me? It might rather be ſaid, ſince Chriſt has an infinite power, and alſo an infinite deſire to ſave mankind, how can any one miſs of this ſalvation, but through his *own unwillingneſs* to be ſaved by him? Conſider how was it, that the lame and blind, the lunatic and leper, the publican and ſinner, found Chriſt to be their Saviour, and to do all that for them, which they wanted to be done to them? It was becauſe they had a *real deſire* of having *that*, which they aſked for, and therefore in true *faith* and *prayer* applied to Chriſt, that his ſpirit and power might enter into them, and heal that which they wanted, and deſired to have healed in them. Every one of theſe ſaid in *faith and deſire, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canſt make me whole.* And the anſwer was always this, *According to thy faith, ſo be it done unto thee.* This is Chriſt's anſwer now, and thus it is done to every one of us at this day, as *our faith is, ſo is it done unto us.* And here lies the whole reaſon of our falling ſhort of the ſalvation of Chriſt, it is becauſe we have no will to it.

But you will ſay, Do not all Chriſtians deſire to have Chriſt to be their Saviour? Yes. But here is the deceit; all would have Chriſt to be their Saviour in the *next world*, and to help them into heaven when they die. But this is not *willing* Chriſt to be thy Saviour; for his ſalvation, if it is had, muſt be had in this world, if he ſaves thee, it muſt be done in this life, by changing and alter-

altering *all that is within thee*, by helping thee to a new heart, as he helped the blind to ſee, the lame to walk, and the dumb to ſpeak. For to have ſalvation from Chriſt, is to be made like unto him; it is to have his humility and meekneſs, his mortification and ſelf-denial, his renunciation of the ſpirit, wiſdom, and honours of this world, his love of God, his deſire of doing God's will, and ſeeking only his honour. To have theſe tempers formed in thy heart, is to have ſalvation from Chriſt; but if thou willeſt not to have theſe tempers, if thy faith does not ſeek, and cry to Chriſt for them in the ſame reality, as the lame aſked to walk, and the blind to ſee, then thou art *unwilling* to have Chriſt to be thy Saviour.

Again, conſider, how was it, that the deep-read *Scribe*, the learned *Rabbi*, the religious *Phariſee*, not only did not receive, but *crucified* their Saviour? It was becauſe they deſired no ſuch Saviour as he was, no ſuch *inward ſalvation* as he offered. They deſired no change of their own nature, no deſtruction of their natural tempers, no deliverance from the love of themſelves, and the enjoyments of their paſſions; they liked the gratifications of their old man, their *long robes*, their *broad phylacteries*, and *greetings* in the markets. They wanted not to have their *pride* and *ſelf-love* dethroned, their covetouſneſs, and ſenſuality ſubdued. Their only deſire was the ſucceſs of *Judaiſm*, to have an *outward* Saviour, a *temporal* prince, that ſhould eſtabliſh their *law* and ceremonies over all the earth. And therefore they crucified their Redeemer, and would have none of his ſalvation, becauſe it conſiſted in a change of their nature, a kingdom of heaven to be opened *within* them by the ſpirit of God.

Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, thou that art called a Chriſtian, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light. Begin to ſearch and dig for this *pearl of eternity*; it cannot coſt thee too much, nor canſt thou buy it too dear, for it is *all*, and when thou haſt found it, thou wilt know, that all which thou haſt ſold or given away for it, is as meer a nothing, as a bubble upon the water.

But

But if thou turneſt from this heavenly pearl, or trampleſt it under thy feet, for the ſake of being rich, or great, either in church or ſtate, if death finds thee in this ſucceſs, thou canſt not then ſay, that though the pearl is loſt, yet ſomething has been gained inſtead of it. For in that parting moment, the things, and the ſounds of this world, will be exactly alike; to have had an eſtate, or only to have heard of it, to have lived at *Lambeth* twenty years, or only to have twenty times paſſed by the palace, will be the ſame good, or the ſame nothing to thee.

I will now ſhew a little more diſtinctly, what this *pearl of eternity is*. *Firſt*, It is the *light* and *ſpirit* of God, which has hitherto done thee but little good, becauſe the deſire of thy heart has been after the light and ſpirit of this world. Thy reaſon, and ſenſes, and paſſions, have turned all their attention to the poor concerns of this life, and therefore thou art a ſtranger to this principle of heaven, theſe riches of eternity. For as God is not, cannot be truly found by any worſhippers, but thoſe who worſhip him in *ſpirit* and in *truth*, ſo this light and ſpirit is not, cannot be found, or enjoyed, but by thoſe, whoſe ſpirit is turned to it.

When man firſt came into being, and ſtood before God as his own image and likeneſs, this light and ſpirit of God were as natural to him, as the *light and air* of this world is natural to other creatures. But when man, not content with the food of eternity, did eat of the earthly tree, this light and ſpirit of heaven were no more natural to him; but inſtead thereof, he was left to the light and ſpirit of this world. And this is that death, which God told *Adam*, he ſhould ſurely die, in the day that he eat of the forbidden tree.

But the goodneſs of God would not leave man in this condition; a redemption from it was immediately granted, and a bruiſer of the ſerpent to bring the light and ſpirit of heaven once more into the human nature. This light and ſpirit of God is called *grace*, *free grace*, or the *ſupernatural* gift, or power

of

of God in the ſoul, becauſe it is ſomething, that the natural powers of the ſoul can no more obtain. Hence it is that every ſtirring of the ſoul, every tendency of the heart towards God and goodneſs, is juſtly aſcribed to the holy ſpirit, or the grace of God. It is becauſe this firſt ſeed of life, which is ſown into the ſoul, is itſelf the light of God, and therefore every ſtirring, or opening of this ſeed of life, every awakening thought or deſire that ariſes from it, muſt be called the moving, or the quickening of the ſpirit of God. Hence alſo we have a plain declaration of the certain truth, of all thoſe ſcriptures, which ſpeak of the inſpiration of God, the operation of the holy ſpirit, the power of the divine light, as the neceſſary agents in the renewal and ſanctification of our ſouls. Hence alſo it is, that all men are exhorted not to quench, or reſiſt, or grieve the ſpirit, that is, this *ſeed of the ſpirit and light of* God that is in all men, as the only ſource of good. Again, *the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh.* By the fleſh and its luſtings, are meant the *mere human nature*, or the *natural man*, as he is by the fall; by the ſpirit is meant the bruiſer of the ſerpent, that ſeed of the light and ſpirit of God, which lieth as a treaſure hid in the ſoul, in order to bring forth the life, that was loſt in *Adam*. Now as the fleſh hath its life, its luſtings, whence all ſorts of evil are truly ſaid to be inſpired, quickned, and ſtirred up in us; ſo the ſpirit being a living principle within us, has its inſpiration, its breathing, its moving, its quickning, from which alone the divine life, or the angel that died in *Adam*, can be born in us.

When this ſpirit is not reſiſted, grieved, and quenched, but its inſpirations and motions ſuffered to grow and increaſe in us, to unite with God, and get power over all the luſts of the fleſh, that the nature, ſpirit, and tempers of Jeſus Chriſt are opened in our ſouls. On the other hand, when the fleſh, hath reſiſted and quenched this ſpirit; then the works of the fleſh, adultery, fornication, murders, lying, hatred, envy, wrath, pride, fooliſhneſs, worldly wiſdom, carnal pru-

prudence, falſe religion, hypocritical holineſs, and ſerpentine ſubtilty, ſet up their kingdom within us.

Secondly, this pearl of eternity is the wiſdom and love of God within thee. In this pearl, all the holy nature, ſpirit, tempers, and inclinations of Chriſt lie, and divine wiſdom and heavenly love will grow up in thee, if thou giveſt but true attention to God. On the other hand, There is hidden alſo in the depth of thy nature the root, or poſſibility of all the helliſh nature, ſpirit and tempers of the fallen angels. For heaven and hell have each of them their foundation within us, and ſpring up in us, according as our heart is turned either to the light of God, or the kingdom of darkneſs. But when this life, which is in the midſt of theſe two eternities, is at an end, either an angel, or a devil will be found to have a birth in us.

Thou needeſt not therefore run here, or there, *ſaying, where is Chriſt? Thou needeſt not ſay, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven, that is, to bring down Chriſt from above? Or who ſhall deſcend into the deep to bring up Chriſt from the dead?* For behold the word, the wiſdom of God, is in thy heart, as a light unto thy feet and lanthorn unto thy paths. It is there as an holy oil, to ſoften and overcome the wrathful properties of thy nature, and change them into the humble meekneſs of light and love. It is there as a ſpeaking word of God in thy ſoul; and, as ſoon as thou art ready to hear, will ſpeak wiſdom and love in thy inward parts, and bring forth Chriſt, with all his holy nature, ſpirit and tempers. Hence it is, that in the Chriſtian church, there have been in all ages, amongſt the moſt illiterate both men and women, who have attained to a deep underſtanding of the myſteries of the wiſdom and love of God in Chriſt Jeſus. And what wonder? Since it is not art or ſcience, or ſkill in grammar or logic, but the opening of the divine life in the ſoul, that can give true underſtanding of the things of God. This life of God in the ſoul, which for its ſmallneſs at firſt, is by our Lord compared

ed to a grain of muſtard ſeed, may be, and too generally is ſuppreſſed, either by worldly cares, or pleaſures, by vain learning, ſenſuality, or ambition. And all this while, whatever church, or profeſſion a man is of, he is a mere natural man, unregenerate, unenlightened by the ſpirit of God. And therefore his religion is no more from heaven, than his fine breeding; his cares have no more goodneſs in them, than his pleaſures; his love is worth no more than his hatred; his zeal for this, or againſt that form of religion, has only the nature of any other worldly contention in it. And thus it is, and muſt be with every mere natural man, whatever appearances he may put on, he may, if he pleaſes, know himſelf to be the ſlave, and machine of his own corrupt tempers and inclinations; to be enlightened, inſpired, quickened and animated by ſelf-love, ſelf-eſteem, and ſelf-ſeeking, which is the only life, and ſpirit of the mere natural man, whether he be Heathen, Jew or Chriſtian.

On the other hand, where-ever this ſeed is ſuffered to take root in the ſoul, there the man is juſtly ſaid to be inſpired, enlightened and moved by the ſpirit of God, and all that is in him, hath the nature, ſpirit, and tempers of heaven in it. As this life grows up in any man, ſo there grows up a true knowledge of the whole myſtery of Godlineſs. All that the goſpel teaches of ſin and grace, of the new and old man, of the light and ſpirit of God, are things not got by hearſay, but inwardly known, felt and experienced. He has then an unction from above which teacheth him all things, a ſpirit that *knoweth what it ought to pray for*, a ſpirit that *prays without ceaſing*, that is riſen with Chriſt from the dead, and has all its converſation in heaven, a ſpirit that hath *groans and ſighs that cannot be uttered*, that travaileth and groaneth with the whole creation, to be delivered from vanity, and have its glorious liberty in that God, from whom it came forth.

Again, *Thirdly*, this *pearl* of eternity, is the *church or temple* of God *within thee*, where alone, thou can'ſt worſhip

worſhip God in *ſpirit and in truth*. *In ſpirit*, becauſe thy ſpirit is that alone which can unite to God, and receive the workings of his ſpirit upon thee: In truth, becauſe this adoration in ſpirit, is that truth and reality, of which all outward forms and rites, though inſtituted by God, are only the figure for a time; but this worſhip is eternal. Accuſtom thyſelf to the holy ſervice of this inward temple. In the midſt of it is the fountain of living water, of which thou mayſt drink, and live for ever. There the birth, the life, the ſufferings, the death, the reſurrection and aſcenſion of Chriſt, are not merely remembered, but inwardly found, and enjoyed as the real ſtates of thy ſoul, which has followed Chriſt in the regeneration. When once thou art well grounded in this inward worſhip; when God has all that he ſhould have of thy heart, when renouncing thy natural will, judgment, tempers and inclinations, thou art wholly given up the obedience of the light and ſpirit of God, to will only in his will, to love only in his love, to be wiſe only in his wiſdom, then it is, that every thing thou doſt, is as a ſong of praiſe, and the common buſineſs of thy life is a conforming to God's will on earth, as angels do in heaven.

But this cannot be, till in obedience to his call, *thou denieſt thyſelf, takeſt up thy daily croſs, and followeſt him*. This is peremptory, it admits of no reſerve, or evaſion, it is the one way to Chriſt and eternal life. Be where thou wilt, either here, or at *Rome*, or *Geneva*, if thou liveſt to thine own will, to the pleaſures of thy natural luſt and appetites, ſenſes and paſſions, and in conformity to the cuſtoms, and ſpirit of this world, thou art dead whilſt thou liveſt. Chriſt can profit thee nothing, thou art a ſtranger to all that is holy and heavenly, and incapable of finding the peace and joy of God. And thus thou art poor, and blind, and naked, and empty, and liveſt a miſerable life in the vanity of time; whilſt all the riches of eternity, the light and ſpirit, the peace and joy of God are waiting for thee. And thus it will always be

with thee, there is no remedy, go where thou wilt, do what thou wilt, all is ſhut up, there is no open door of ſalvation, no deliverance from thy corrupt nature, no overcoming of the world, no ſolid joy above, till dying to thyſelf and the world, thou turneſt to the light, and ſpirit, and power of God.

But thou wilt perhaps ſay, How ſhall I have theſe riches of eternity, this ſpirit, and wiſdom, and peace of God within me? Thy *firſt thought* of repentance, or deſire of turning to God, is thy *firſt diſcovery* of this light and ſpirit of God. It is the voice and language of God, though thou knoweſt it not. It is the bruiſer of the ſerpent's head, who is beginning to preach *within* thee, what he firſt preached in publick, ſaying, *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* When therefore but the ſmalleſt deſire calleth thee towards God, give it time and leave to ſpeak; and take care thou refuſe not him that ſpeaketh. For it is not an angel from heaven that ſpeaketh to thee, but it is the eternal *word* of God, that word which at firſt created thee, is thus beginning to call thee unto righteouſneſs, that a new man may be formed in thee in the image and likeneſs of God. But above all things, beware of taking this deſire of repentance, to be the effect of thy own natural ſenſe and reaſon; for in ſo doing, thou ſhutteſt the door againſt God, turneſt away from him, and thy repentance (if thou haſt any) will be only a vain unprofitable work of thy own hands, that will do thee no more good, than a well that is without water. But if thou takeſt this deſire of turning to God, to be, as in truth it is, the *working, redeeming* power of the holy Jeſus, if thou doſt reverence and adhere to it, as ſuch, this *faith will make thee whole*; and by thus believing in Chriſt, though thou wert dead, yet ſhalt thou live.

Now all dependeth upon thy right ſubmiſſion and obedience to this ſpeaking of God in thy ſoul. Therefore liſten not to the ſuggeſtions of thy own reaſon, run not on in thy own will, but be humbly attentive to this new riſen light within thee; open thy heart, thy eyes, and ears to all its impreſſions.

Let

Let it enlighten, teach, frighten, torment, judge, and condemn thee, as it pleaſeth; turn not away from it, hear all it ſaith, ſeek for no relief out of it, conſult not with fleſh and blood, but with a heart full of reſignation to God, pray only this prayer, that God's kingdom may come, and his will be done in thy ſoul. Stand faithfully in this ſtate of preparation, thus given up to the ſpirit of God, and then the work of thy repentance will be wrought, and thou wilt ſoon find, that he that is in thee, is much greater than all that are againſt thee.

But that thou mayſt be firmly aſſured, that this reſignation to, and dependance upon the working of God's ſpirit, is right and ſound, I ſhall lay before thee two fundamental truths.

Firſt, That through the whole nature of things, nothing can do, or be a real good to thy ſoul, but the *operation of God* upon it. *Secondly*, That all the diſpenſations of God from the fall of *Adam*, to the preaching of the goſpel, were only for this one end, to prepare, and diſpoſe the ſoul for the operation of the ſpirit of God upon it. Theſe two great truths deeply apprehended, put the ſoul in its right ſtate, in a continual dependance upon God, and a readineſs to receive all good from him. They will keep thee ſafe from all errors, and falſe zeal in forms of religion, from a ſectarian ſpirit, from bigotry, and ſuperſtition; they will teach thee the true difference between the means and end of religion, and the regard thou ſheweſt to the ſhell, will be only ſo far, as the kernel is to be found in it.

Man, by his fall, had broke off from his true center, his proper place in God, and therefore the life and operation of God was no more in him. He was fallen from a life in God, into an animal life of ſelf-love, ſelf-eſteem, and ſelf-ſeeking in the poor periſhing enjoyments of this world. This was the *natural ſtate* of man by the fall. He was an apoſtate from God, and his natural life was all idolatry, where *ſelf* was the great idol, that was worſhipped inſtead of God. All ſin, is nothing elſe but the various ope-

rations of ſelf-love, ſelf-eſteem, and ſelf-ſeeking, which ſeparate the ſoul from God, and end in eternal death.

On the other hand, all *grace, redemption, ſalvation, ſanctification, ſpiritual life*, is nothing elſe but ſo much of the life, and operation of God found again in the ſoul. It is man come back again into his center or place in God, from whence he had broke off. The beginning of the life of God in the ſoul, was then firſt made, when the mercy of God promiſed a ſeed, which ſhould bruiſe the head of the ſerpent. Then was given a degree of the divine life, which if rightly cultivated, would make of every fallen man, a new born ſon of God.

All the ſacrifices, and inſtitutions of the antient Patriarchs, the law of *Moſes*, with all its types and rites, and ceremonies, had this only end; they were the methods of divine wiſdom for a time, to keep the hearts of men from the wanderings of idolatry, in a ſtate of holy expectation; they were to make way for the farther operation of God upon the ſoul; or, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, to be as a ſchoolmaſter unto Chriſt. That is, till the birth, the death, the reſurrection and aſcenſion of Chriſt, ſhould conquer death, and hell, open a new diſpenſation of God, and baptize mankind afreſh with the Holy Ghoſt, and fire of heaven. Then, that is, on the day of *pentecoſt*, a *new diſpenſation* of God came forth; which on God's part, was the operation of the Holy Spirit in gifts and graces upon the whole church. And on man's part, it was the adoration of God in *ſpirit* and *in truth*. Thus all that was done by God, from the promiſe given to *Adam*, to Chriſt's ſitting down on the right hand of God, was for this end, to remove all that ſtood between God and man, and to make way for the immediate, and continual operation of God upon the ſoul: And that man, baptized with the holy ſpirit, and born again, ſhould wholly give up his ſoul to the operation of God's ſpirit, to know, to love, to will, to pray, to worſhip, to preach, to exhort, to uſe all the faculties of his mind, and all the out-

outward things of this world, as enlightened, inſpired, moved and guided by the Holy Ghoſt: Who by this laſt diſpenſation of God, was given to be a comforter, a teacher, and guide to the church, to abide with it for ever.

This is Chriſtianity, a ſpiritual ſociety, not becauſe it has no worldly concerns, but becauſe all its members, as ſuch, are born of the ſpirit, animated and governed by the ſpirit of God. It is conſtantly called by our Lord the kingdom of God, or heaven, becauſe all its miniſtry and ſervice, all that is done in it, is done in obedience and ſubjection to *that ſpirit*, by which angels live, and are governed in heaven. Hence our bleſſed Lord taught his diſciples to pray, that this kingdom might come, that ſo God's will might be done on earth, as it is in heaven; which could not be, but by that ſame ſpirit, by which it is done in heaven. The ſhort is this: The kingdom of ſelf, is the great apoſtaſy from the life of God in the ſoul, and every one wherever he be, that liveth unto himſelf, is ſtill under the fall and apoſtaſy from God. The kingdom of Chriſt, is the ſpirit, and power of God, dwelling and manifeſting itſelf in the inward man; and no one is a member of this kingdom, but ſo far as the ſpirit reigns in him. Theſe two kingdoms take in all mankind, he that is not of one, is certainly in the other; dying to one, is living to the other.

Hence we may gather the following truths: *Firſt*, That when the call of God to repentance firſt ariſeth in thy ſoul, thou art wholly to diſregard the workings of thy own will, reaſon and judgment. It is becauſe all theſe are falſe counſellors, the ſworn ſervants, bribed ſlaves of thy fallen nature; and therefore, if the operation of God is to have its effect in thee, all theſe are to be ſilenced, till they have learned obedience and ſubjection to the ſpirit of God. Now this is not requiring thee to become a fool, or to give up thy ſenſe and reaſon; but is the ſhorteſt way to have thy ſenſe and reaſon delivered from folly, and guided by that light, which is wiſdom itſelf.

A child that denies his own will, and reaſon, to be guided by the will and reaſon of a truly wiſe and underſtanding tutor, cannot be ſaid to make himſelf a fool, and give up the benefit of his rational nature, but to take the ſhorteſt way to have his own will and reaſon made truly a bleſſing to him.

Secondly, Hence is to be ſeen the true ground of univerſal mortification and ſelf-denial with regard to all our ſenſes, appetites, tempers, paſſions and judgments. It is becauſe our whole nature, as fallen from the life of God, is in a ſtate of contrariety to the order and end of our creation, a continual ſource of diſorderly appetites, corrupt tempers, and falſe judgments. And therefore every motion of it is to be mortified, changed and purified from its natural ſtate, before we can enter into the kingdom of God. Thus when our Lord ſaith, *Except a man hateth his father and mother, yea, and his own life, he cannot be my diſciple;* it is becauſe our beſt tempers are yet full of the imperfections of our fallen nature. Not as if father and mother were to be hated; but *that love*, which an unregenerate perſon, hath towards them, is to be *hated*; as being a blind ſelf-love, full of all the *weakneſs* and *partiality*, with which fallen man loves, honours, and cleaves to himſelf. This love, born from corrupt fleſh and blood, is to be *hated* and *parted* with, that we may love them with ſuch a love, and on ſuch a motive, as Chriſt hath loved us. And then the *diſciple* of Chriſt far exceeds all others in the love of parents. Again, our own life is to be hated; the reaſon is plain, becauſe there is nothing lovely in it. It is a *legion* of evil, an *apoſtaſy* from the *life* and *power* of God in the ſoul; a life that is *death* to heaven, that is pure unmixed *idolatry*, that lives not to God, and therefore *all this own life* is to be abſolutely *hated*, if the nature, ſpirit, tempers and inclinations of Chriſt are to be in us.

Thus when our Lord further ſaith, unleſs a man forſake *all that he hath he cannot be my diſciple*. The reaſon is plain: all that the natural man hath, is in the poſſeſſion of ſelf-love, and therefore this poſſeſſion is to be abſolutely forſaken, and parted with.

All

All that he hath, is to be put into other hands, to be given to divine love, or this *natural man* cannot be changed into a diſciple of Chriſt. For ſelf-love in *all that it hath*, is earthly, ſenſual and deviliſh, and therefore muſt have *all* taken away from it; and then to the natural man all is loſt, he hath nothing left, all is laid down at the feet of Jeſus. Then all things are common, as ſoon as ſelf-love has loſt the poſſeſſion of them. And then the diſciple of Chriſt, *though having nothing, yet poſſeſſeth all things*, all that the natural man hath forſaken, is reſtored to the diſciple of Chriſt an hundred fold. For ſelf-love, the greateſt of all thieves, being now caſt out, and all that he had ſtolen and hidden, thus taken from him, and put into the hands of divine love, every *mite* becometh a large treaſure, and mammon openeth the door into everlaſting habitations. This was the ſpirit of the firſt draught of a Chriſtian church at *Jeruſalem*, a church made truly after the pattern of heaven, where the love that reigns in heaven reigned in it, where divine love broke down all the ſelfiſh fences, the locks and bolts of *me*, *mine*, and laid all things common to the members of this new kingdom of God on earth.

Now though many years did not paſs after the age of the apoſtles, before *Satan*, got footing in the church, and ſet up merchandize in the houſe of God; yet this one heart, and one ſpirit, which then appeared in the *Jeruſalem* church, is that *one heart* and *ſpirit* of divine love, to which all are called, that would be true diſciples of Chriſt. And though the practice of it is loſt as to the church in general, yet it ought not to have been loſt; and therefore every Chriſtian ought to make it his great care, and prayer to have it reſtored in himſelf. And then though born in the dregs of time, or living in *Babylon*, he will be as truly a member of the firſt church at *Jeruſalem*, as if he had lived in it, in the days of the apoſtles. This ſpirit of love, born of that celeſtial fire, with which Chriſt baptizes his true diſciples, is alone that ſpirit, which can enter into heaven, and

therefore

therefore is that ſpirit which is to be in us, while we are on earth. For no one can enter into heaven, till he is made heavenly, till the ſpirit of heaven is entered into him. And therefore all that our Lord hath ſaid of a man's parting with all that he hath, is abſolutely neceſſary from the nature of the thing.

But thou wilt perhaps ſay, if all ſelf-love is to be renounced, then all love of our neighbour is renounced, becauſe the commandment is, only *to love our neighbour as ourſelves.* The anſwer is eaſy. There is but one love in heaven, and yet the angels of God love one another in the ſame manner, as they love themſelves. The matter is thus: The one ſupreme, *rule* of love, which is a *law* to all intelligent beings, and will be a law to all eternity, is this, *God alone is to be loved for himſelf*, and *all other beings only in him, and for him.* Whatever intelligent creature lives not under this rule, is ſo far fallen from the order of his creation, and is, till he returns to this eternal law of love, an apoſtate from God, and incapable of the kingdom of heaven.

Now if God alone is to be loved for himſelf, then no creature is to be loved for itſelf: and ſo all ſelf-love in every creature is abſolutely condemned.

And if all created beings are only to be loved in and for God, then my neighbour is to be loved, as I love myſelf, and I am only to love myſelf, as I love my neighbour, or any other created being, that is, only in and for God. And thus the command of loving our neighbour as ourſelves, ſtands firm, and yet all ſelf-love is plucked up by the roots. But what is loving any creature, only in, and for God? It is when we love it merely as it is God's and belongs to him, this is loving it *in* God. And when all that we wiſh, intend, or do to it, is done from a love of God, for the honour of God, and in conformity to the will of God, this is loving it for God. This is the *one love* that is, and muſt be the ſpirit of all creatures, that live united to God. Now this is no ſpeculative refinement, but the ſimple truth, a firſt law of nature, and a neceſſary band of union be-

between God and the creature. The creature has loſt the life of God whenever its love does not thus begin and end in God.

Thirdly, Hence we may learn the true nature and worth of all *ſelf-denial* and *mortification*. As to their nature, conſidered in themſelves, they have nothing of *goodneſs* or *holineſs*, nor are any real parts of our ſanctification, they have no *quickning ſanctifying power* in them; their only worth conſiſts in this, that they break down that which ſtands between God and us, and make way for the *quickning, ſanctifying ſpirit* of God to operate: Which operation of God is the *only* thing that can raiſe the divine life in the ſoul, or help it to the ſmalleſt degree of real holineſs. As in our creation, we had only *that degree* of divine life, which the power of God derived into us; ſo in our redemption, or regaining *that* firſt perfection, all muſt be again the operation of God.

Hence alſo we may learn, why many people not only loſe the benefit, but are even the worſe for all their mortifications. It is becauſe they miſtake the whole nature of them. They practiſe them for their *own ſakes*, as things good in themſelves, they think them to be real parts of holineſs, and ſo reſt in them, and grow full of ſelf-eſteem, and ſelf-admiration for their progreſs in them. This makes them ſelf-ſufficient, moroſe, ſevere judges of all thoſe that fall ſhort of their mortifications.

And thus their ſelf-denials do only *that* for them, which indulgences do for other people, they withſtand and hinder the operation of God upon their ſouls.

There is no avoiding this fatal error, but by deeply entering into this great truth, that all our own working can do no good to us, but as it leads us in the beſt manner to the light and ſpirit of God, which alone brings life and ſalvation into the ſoul. *Stretch forth thy hand*, ſaid our Lord to the man, *that had a withered hand*; he did ſo, and *it was immediately made whole as the other*.

Now had this man any ground for pride, for the ſhare he had in the reſtoring of his hand? Yet

juſt

juſt ſuch is our ſhare in the raiſing up of the ſpiritual life within us. All that we can do, is only like this man's ſtretching out his hand; the reſt is the work of Chriſt, the only giver of life to the withered hand, or the dead ſoul. When the Virgin *Mary* conceived the holy Jeſus, all that ſhe did towards it herſelf, was only this ſingle act of faith and reſignation; *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.* This is all that we can do towards the conception of the new man in ourſelves. Now this truth is eaſily conſented to, and a man thinks he believes it, becauſe he does not deny it. But this is not enough, it is to be apprehended in a deep, full, and practical aſſurance, in ſuch a manner as a man knows that he did not create the ſtars, or cauſe life to riſe up in himſelf. And then it is a belief that makes room for the operation of God upon it. His light then enters with full power into the ſoul, and his holy ſpirit directs all that is done in it, and ſo man lives again in God as a new creature. For this truth thus firmly believed, will have theſe two effects: *Firſt*, it will keep the ſoul continually turned towards God, in faith, prayer, deſire, confidence, and reſignation for all that it wants to have done in it, and to it; which will be a continual ſource of all divine graces. The ſoul thus turned to God, muſt be always receiving from him. It ſtands at the true door of all divine communications, and the light of God as freely enters into it, as the light of the ſun enters into the air. *Secondly*, It will fix and ground the ſoul in a true and laſting ſelf-denial. For by thus knowing our own nothingneſs and inability, that we have no other capacity for good, but that of receiving it from God alone; no room is left for ſpiritual pride; we are ſaved from a phariſaical holineſs, from wrong opinions of our own works and good deeds, and from a multitude of errors, the moſt dangerous to our ſouls, all which ariſe from the ſomething that we take ourſelves to be either in nature or grace. But when we once apprehend but in ſome good degree, the all of God, and

and the nothingneſs of ourſelves, we have got a truth whoſe uſefulneſs and benefit no words can expreſs. It brings a kind of infallibility into the ſoul, in which it dwells; all that is vain, and falſe, and deceitful, is forced to vaniſh before it. When our religion is founded on this, it has the firmneſs of a rock, and its height reaches unto heaven. The world, the fleſh and the devil can do no hurt to it; all enemies are known, and all diſarmed by this great truth, dwelling in our ſouls. It is the knowledge of the all of God, that makes cherubim, and ſeraphim to be flames of divine love. For where this all of God is truly known, and felt in any creature, there its whole breath and ſpirit is a fire of love, nothing but a pure, diſintereſted love can riſe up in it, or come from it, a love that begins and ends in God. For this pure love introduces the creature into the all of God, all that is in God, is opened in the creature, it is united with God, and hath the life of God manifeſted in it.

There is but one ſalvation for all mankind, and that is the life of God in the ſoul. God has but one deſign towards all mankind, and that is to generate his own life, light, and ſpirit in them, that all may be as ſo many images, temples, and habitations of the Holy Trinity.

Now there is but one poſſible way for man to attain this ſalvation, or life of God in the ſoul: and that is, *the deſire of the ſoul turned to God.* Through this deſire the poor prodigal ſon leaveth his huſks and ſwine, and haſteth to his father; 'tis becauſe of *this deſire* that the father ſeeth the ſon, while yet afar off, that he runs out to meet him, falleth on his neck, and kiſſeth him. No ſooner is this deſire in motion towards God, but the operation of God's ſpirit anſwers to it, cheriſhes and welcomes its firſt beginnings, ſignified by the father's ſeeing, and having compaſſion on his ſon, whilſt yet afar off, that is, in the firſt beginnings of his deſire. Thus does this deſire bring the ſoul to God, and God into the ſoul. Suppoſe this deſire not to be alive, either in a *Jew*,

or

or *Chriſtian*, and then all the ſacrifices, the ſervice, the worſhip either of the law or the goſpel, are but dead works, that bring no life into the ſoul. Suppoſe this deſire to be awakened, though in ſouls that never heard either of the law or goſpel, and the operation of God enters into them, and Chriſt bleſſes thoſe that never heard of his name.

Oh my God, juſt and good, how great is thy love and mercy to mankind, that heaven is thus every where open, and Chriſt thus the common Saviour, to all that turn the deſire of their hearts to thee! Oh ſweet power of the bruiſer of the ſerpent, that ſtirs and works in every man, who has a deſire, to find his happineſs in God! O holy Jeſus, heavenly *light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, that redeemeth every ſoul that followeth thy light; O holy Trinity, immenſe ocean of love, in which all mankind live, and move, and have their being! None live out of thy love, but all are embraced in the arms of thy mercy, as ſoon as their heart is turned to thee! Oh plain, and eaſy, and ſimple way of ſalvation, wanting no ſubtleties of art or ſcience, no borrowed learning, no refinements of reaſon, but all done by the ſimple motion of every heart, that truly longs after God. For no ſooner is the deſire of the creature in motion towards God, but the deſire of God co-operates with it. And in this united deſire of God, and the creature, is the ſalvation of the ſoul brought forth. For the ſoul is ſhut out of God, and impriſoned in its own dark workings of fleſh and blood, merely becauſe it deſires to live to the vanity of this world. This deſire is its darkneſs, its death, its impriſonment, and ſeparation from God.

When therefore the *firſt ſpark* of a deſire after God ariſes in thy ſoul, cheriſh it with all thy care, it is nothing leſs than a touch of the divine loadſtone, that is to draw thee out of the vanity of time, into the riches of eternity. Get up therefore and follow it as gladly as the wiſe-men of the Eaſt followed the ſtar from heaven that appeared to them.

Chriſt

Chriſt ſaith, "I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, walketh not in darkneſs." He directs us only to himſelf. He is the morning ſtar, and is generated and riſeth in us, and ſhineth in the darkneſs of our nature. O how great a triumph is there in the ſoul, when he ariſeth in it! then a man knows, as he never knew before, that he is a ſtranger in a foreign land.

A PRAYER.

OH heavenly father, infinite, fathomleſs depth of never ceaſing love, ſave me from myſelf, from the diſorderly workings of my fallen, corrupted nature, and let mine eyes ſee, my heart, and ſpirit feel and find thy ſalvation in Chriſt Jeſus.

O God, who madeſt me for thyſelf, to ſhew forth thy goodneſs in me, manifeſt, I humbly beſeech thee, the life-giving power of thy holy nature within me; help me to ſuch a true and living faith in thee, ſuch hunger, and thirſt after the life of thy holy Jeſus in my ſoul, that all that is within me, may be turned from every inward thought, or outward work, that is not thee, thy holy Jeſus, and heavenly working in my ſoul. *Amen.*

The End of the Firſt VOLUME.